HELSINKI BLACKMAIL *By A. B. Magil*

NEW MASSES

FIFTEEN CENTS A COPY NOVEMBER 18, 1941

CASE STUDY OF A WAR INDUSTRY

How planlessness in copper production slows down armaments output. The union offers a program. By Bruce Minton.

PRICE CONTROL FINAGLING

A congressional mystery is unraveled. By Julian Webb

TURNING THE TIDE

By the Editors

"BREAD AND A STONE"

A review by Samuel Sillen of Alvah Bessie's new novel

Joseph Starobin, Gropper, Joy Davidman, Colonel T., William Blake

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Between Ourselves

WATCH for NM on the newsstands one day earlier next week, as we will come out Wednesday instead of Thursday because of the Thanksgiving holiday.

The quickest response we ever had to an issue came last week, on the very day that the magazine appeared, the bulk of it devoted to a celebration of the twenty-fourth anniversary of the November Revolution. A New York reader bought a copy that morning, and an hour or so later wrote us a special delivery letter which reached us during the afternoon. He "just wanted to tell us," he said, that he liked the issue "very much." Expanding on that moderate statement, he wrote two pages of single space typing on almost everything in the issue from the star design on the cover through Samuel Sillen's Review and Comment article ("USA—USSR: Our Common Heritage"), with special attention to Joseph North's "The Truth Does Come." Nothing was skipped, apparently, not even a "spot" illustration. Reading the letter, we got a little breathless but it was a wonderful pickup for a Thursday afternoon with the worries of putting together a new issue just beginning to accumulate.

There were more letters the next day and the next, each with a nice word for the issue as a whole with some extra tribute to whatever feature had particularly impressed the correspondent. The music lovers went for Benny Goodman's "To My Friend Prokofieff," and practically everyone was pleased with the statements from Joseph E. Davies, Pierre Cot, Lion Feuchtwanger, and other notables. Spaniards in this country, veterans of the International Brigade, and others were especially eloquent and warm in their comments on Jose Bergamin's moving tribute, "A Catholic Looks at Moscow." All in all, we felt that we had reason to be proud—and more reason to be grateful, not only for the welcome the issue got but for the eagerness of those readers to let us know how they felt about it.

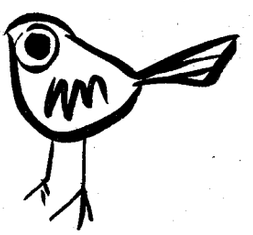
If our life were all a matter of projecting and carrying through issues—special anniversary ones or the every-week kind—it would be, very relatively speaking, simple. But we are not allowed to forget the wolf at the door. Two weeks ago we said, "Even though you will not see our appeal in print in the next issue, you will realize that it continues. . . ." Many of our readers did realize that, and acted upon it. We received in those two weeks $849. However, we are still $3,201 from the goal of $7,600 which was set as the absolute minimum for the magazine's sustenance. This issue and the one before were made possible only through the generosity of three of our friends. We do not want to repeat here what we have said in the issues of a few weeks ago about NM's drive for funds. We do not think it is necessary. All we ask is that you think it over, think what the magazine means in a world struggle of which you are a part—and make that extra effort *now,* while there is time, to keep it in the frontlines.

Meanwhile we go on planning for the future. NM editor A. B. Magil leaves this weekend for Detroit to cover one of the most important conventions of these times, the national CIO meeting. His article will appear in an early issue. Our series on "The Negro in American Life" will continue with an article by Samuel Putnam on the Negro in Latin America, to be published shortly. Herbert Aptheker, who is editing the series and who contributed an article to it, has won the second prize of $50 in the annual award to writers made by the Association of Negro Life and History. The piece of writing for which Aptheker was honored is a lengthy article titled "Militant Abolitionism," published in the October 1941 issue of the *Journal of Negro History* and since reprinted in booklet form.

It is becoming hard to keep track of the Gropper exhibits. His anti-Hitler cartoons, originally published in NM from 1933 to the present, are being shown this week at two different places in New York, both of them trade union headquarters—the Amalgamated Meatcutters Union, Local 623 (1 Columbus Ave.) and the Cafeteria Workers Union, Local 302 (701 Seventh Ave.). The entire exhibit is titled "A History of A. Hitler by W. Gropper" and was first seen this summer at the National Maritime Union's old headquarters.

Joseph Starobin, NM foreign editor, will speak at the Workers School of New York, Saturday, November 15, at 2:15 PM, on "Showdown in the Far East—Japan's Next Step."

Several of our contributors, including William Blake, Richard Wright, Christina Stead, Millen Brand, Myra Page, Ben Field, and Lillian Barnard Gilkes, are participating in the Friday night "Readings from Works in Progress" held under the auspices of the League of American Writers—in which an author reads from the book, play, or long poem which he is completing and a panel of experts comment on the work. The readings are held at 237 East 61st St., New York City, at 8:30 PM each Friday. For details as to admission charge, program, etc., consult the League of American Writers, 381 Fourth Ave., NYC.



NM's Annual Artists and Writers Ball—this year's is the thirtieth—will feature a brand new show, so new that it hasn't a name yet. The general theme is "a model army camp revue," and the songs and sketches have been contributed by a corps that includes Earl Robinson, Alex North, Marc Blitzstein, Alan Max, Mike Stratton, Sol Aarons, and George Kleinsinger. There will also be an all-star swing band with headliners like Sidney Bechet, Red Allen, Art Hodes, J. C. Higginbotham, Bud Freeman, Muggsy Spanier, Teddy Bunn, Roy Eldridge, and Sidney Catlett. The time is December 6, the place Webster Hall. More later.

Who's Who

BRUCE MINTON is NM's Washington editor. . . . Julian Webb is a free lance writer and research worker in the field of national affairs. . . . William Blake has written a number of books, the latest of which is *The Copperheads.* . . . Myra Page is the author of *Moscow Yankee.* . . . Michael T. Ames has written music criticism for a number of magazines. . . . Claude Cockburn was formerly editor of the newsletter *The Week* and Washington correspondent for the London *Times.* . . . Col. T. is the pseudonym of a military expert. . . . Bert Talcott is a West Coast free lance writer.

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NEW MASSES
VOLUME XLI NOVEMBER 18 NUMBER 7

COPPERHEADS AND BOTTLENECKS

Bruce Minton says planlessness and profit-grubbing in the copper industry have not helped production of a basic war material. What the union proposes. How to step up output.

Washington.

IT IS hardly a secret that Cabinet members have been consulting at the White House over too-slow progress and over the serious abuses that still exist within the defense production apparatus itself. So far, the OPM, while it has lately been giving more leadership, cannot be said to have things fully in hand. So far, the larger industrialists, while more and more of them are realizing the immediate need for speed, have by no means accomplished all that must be accomplished. But it would be incorrect to suggest that all is as black as might appear at first sight. For a new pressure is being applied to get production humming. And that pressure comes from the unions.

In the past weeks the unions have indicated an ever greater recognition that they can give decisive leadership to industry by showing the government and management how to guarantee sufficient war supplies. The copper industry is a case in point. Concern over the failure to get copper production out of its current anarchic state has led the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers Union to study difficulties hampering production and to see what could be done about it.

No elaborate argument is needed to prove that copper is an essential metal. Shell casings, electrical wire and equipment, trucks, tanks, warships—these are a few of the hundreds of items dependent on copper. But the industry is in a mess; production spurts ahead for a moment, then falters. Shortages have been obvious since the time defense production was first started. But when it came to correcting this weakness, both management and the defense officials proceeded without plan, without direction. Thought centered on more and more profits, on gains for this corporation or that, on strategical position within the industry, and seldom, if at all, on the need for greater supplies and the reasons for the need. Copper production suffered. With insufficient copper supplies, almost three-quarters of the mines operating before 1929 remain shut. With insufficient copper to maintain at capacity those fabricating plants now existing, the defense administration has appropriated $35,000,000 to build new plants which will further expand capacity by three-quarters of what it is today. While mines are not yielding what they should, labor turnover is tremendous, and miners are laid off at a time when greater quantities of ore are needed.

At this juncture, the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers has turned its attention to finding a solution. The union is now engaged in drawing up a brief to be submitted to the government, showing how the copper industry has been mishandled, how defense officials have not helped matters, and proposing their own program of action. The precise plan that the union will offer is still to be announced. But conversations with members of the MMSW give some idea of the general approach. And one thing is certain, when the union does make its findings known, there will undoubtedly be a public reckoning, because certain corporations and certain defense officials over-sympathetic to them do not appear in the most favorable light.

FIRST OF ALL, the MMSW knows the score. It is a nationwide union of non-ferrous metal workers; it organizes at the mines and follows through to the final fabricating processes. The membership's intimate technical knowledge, and understanding of difficulties, will aid in offering a plan to cut through delays and to eliminate shortages.

For their part, defense officials have taken a hit-or-miss attitude, offering no coordinated program. They approve heavy importations from South America; they offer management assistance in getting labor to work a six-day week in place of the established five-day week; they ask curtailment of plants handling consumer goods; they want plant capacity expanded for defense production; and they urge price increases as an incentive for greater support.

The unionists view the question quite differently. Of all the tentative actions and proposals taken by the defense agencies, only the first—to increase imports—seems to mean anything. None of the rest has brought results or promises success in the future. For example, price increases in themselves will not get ore out of the ground, and higher prices do not rid copper mining of inefficiency. All that such increases hold as a prospect is greater cost to the government and therefore to the taxpayers. Similarly, the demand for curtailment of production in some plants, while simultaneously blueprints are drawn up for new mills, adds up to a rather obvious paradox. Why not convert plants now engaged in turning out consumer goods so that they can produce defense items?

In addition, attempts to make workers the scapegoats do more to discourage increased production than any other proposal. It stands to reason that to worsen working conditions and to lower the standard of living does not help to bolster morale. Workers are willing enough to make sacrifices. But sacrifices must have some purpose: there is no appeal in sacrifices that mean more dollars and cents in dividends for the already prosperous owners but which fail to boost production.

The union therefore wants to replace the planless, haphazard methods followed so far, with an integrated program. There are two general methods of achieving this end. First, those mines shut down after the 1929 crisis can be reopened. In 1929, 180 copper mines were in operation; in 1939, only forty-nine mines were being worked, and the output had dropped twenty-eight percent below 1929. Of course, the union concedes that it will cost something to get the closed mines functioning again; but once they are brought into production, they can be operated at a substantial profit for the companies.

Secondly, those units now producing copper can increase their efficiency enormously. Many of them operate on a one-shift a day basis; those that use two or three shifts put on reduced crews for the extra time. The union wants copper mined twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. To those operators who object that "it can't be done," the union can well answer, "Ridiculous!" In the first place, it *is* being done in several copper mines. Moreover, continual operation has been successfully carried on in every type of metal mining. Why should copper mines be considered different?

SUCH CONTINUAL MINING would eliminate the need for the six-day week that copper management is so anxious to institute. There's a good reason for this eagerness: permission to adopt a six-day week would break through wage-hour laws and also obstruct the union's insistence on overtime pay for overtime work. Besides, the six-day week is meaningless if copper mines continue to run as they do at present. Even during the present emergency, an OPM survey found that in a mining camp of 5,000 employees, half the men worked an average of half a month. The labor turnover was huge, and this camp was typical of the industry. In a brief space of time, approximately fifty percent of the workers leave their jobs and are replaced by other workers, so that a good proportion of the men is not employed anything like full time. The reason is not hard to determine. The companies refuse to pay adequate wages; instead, they attempt to speed up miners by offering bonuses. But bonuses are

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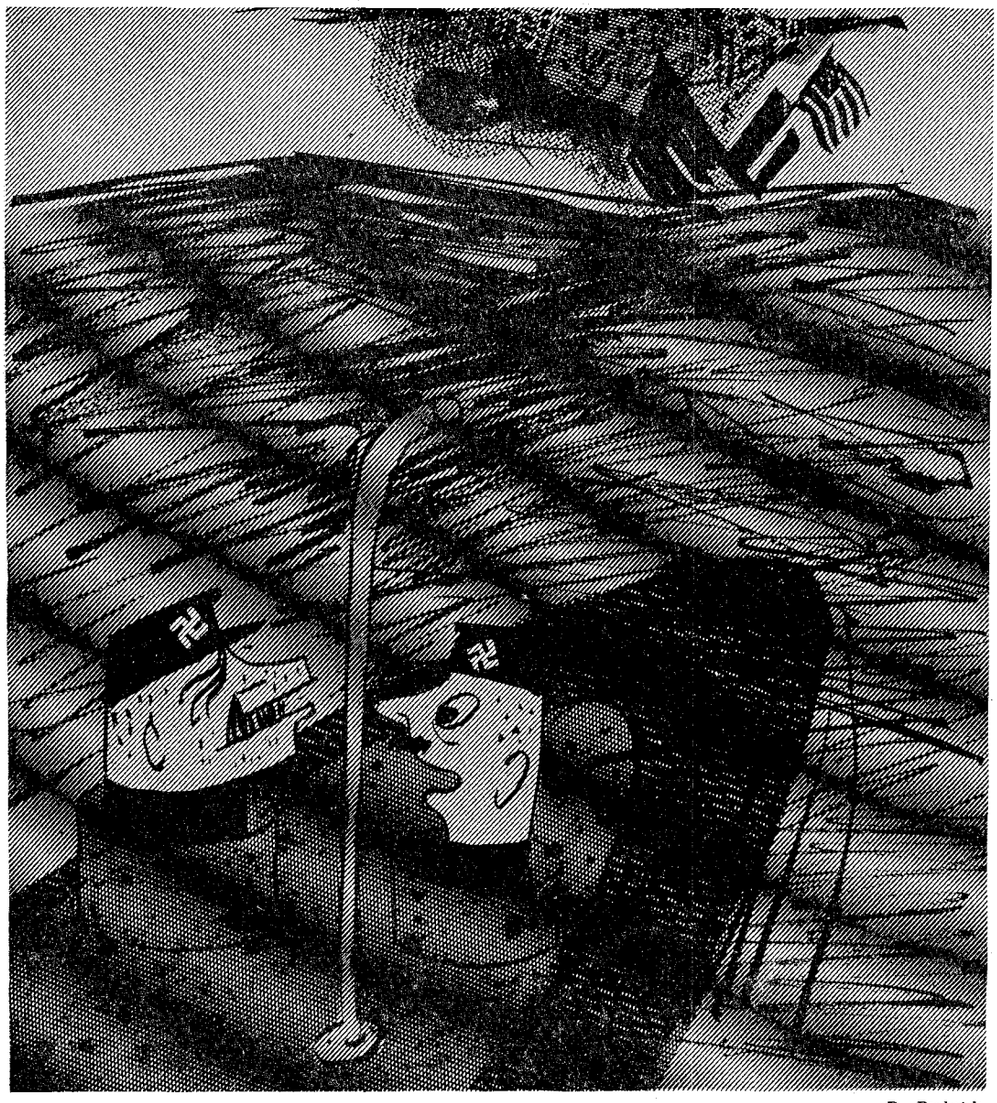

R. Frederick

"It's all right, Herr Kapitan, Wheeler will fix it."

based on the contract system which in turn ties a man's earnings directly to the amount of ore he is able to dig. Those working in places where the yield per ton of rock is not particularly high, are penalized. As a result, the moment a worker runs into rock yielding insufficient ore to allow him to earn a living wage, he quits the mine and tries to find work at another mine where the ore in the rock is running to higher percentages. In consequence, waste is great, time is lost, and mines are not worked to their full advantage.

By paying adequate wages, by working full shifts all week and yet keeping the five-day week, the mines could be kept at capacity production at all times. Certainly, it seems far more logical, far more efficient to work a mine intensively without pause than to depend, as has been preferred, on a day's additional work from those who are lucky enough to have employment. What excuse can there be for allowing the mines to stand idle for more hours a week than they are in operation?

THE IMMEDIATE QUESTION arises as to whether there is available a great enough labor supply for fulltime operation. In the decade following 1929, 20,000 copper miners lost their jobs. Not counting the influx of new workers, there seems no doubt that the labor supply is more than ample. Besides, copper miners are paid wages below the standards obtaining in coal, and in such industries as steel, rubber, automobile, and oil refining. In the important Michigan copper range, miners receive two to three dollars less per day than the low average for the industry. Once wages are improved to grant reasonable earnings, there would be plenty seeking work in copper mines.

Again, efficiency is dependent on working conditions. Fresh air in the mines means a greater output per man. Proper ventilation is necessary for proper work. Wherever management in rare cases has reduced temperature and humidity underground, production figures soar rapidly.

In fact, there are those who say—and no doubt the union's brief will point this out—that if management balks at the expense of improving working conditions, the government may be able to help. For if defense officials seem intent on giving money to management, they might just as well give it in a way that will help raise production. Recently $35,000,000 in government funds was given to the brass industry to expand factory capacity by seventy-nine percent. All well and good. But to make more brass means to have sufficient supplies of copper and zinc. Now, brass mill capacity is estimated at present at about 142,000 tons a month. This capacity demands a monthly supply of 106,400 tons of copper. Adding other uses to which copper is put, the needed supply of this metal to keep existing fabricating equipment running amounts to 169,000 tons a month. Yet the total domestic output per month fluctuates between 90,000 and 95,000 tons, and total imports add another 40,000 to 45,000 tons. At best then, present supplies fail to meet demand by 29,000 tons. Yet the government has earmarked a huge sum to expand brass capacity seventy-nine percent. What sense does that make, if there is not enough copper to supply present plants with metal? The $35,000,000 could better have been used to increase ore output by bringing neglected mines back into production, by installing ventilation systems, by improving methods of mining so that mines would increase their yield.

That, however, has not been the way. Planlessness and profit grubbing have resulted only in anarchy. New plants are built, and stocks of copper (because of mining methods) have been so inadequate that early in October defense officials were forced to issue an industry-wide order curtailing the use of copper for consumer goods in more than 100 different types of products. Immediately, shell cases began to pour out of factories; the flood was so great that on October 23 the War Department had to order production on this important war item to cease. Overproduction had exceeded loading facilities. In turn, the copper industry, at a time of national crisis, went into reverse: from three shifts, factories changed to one shift. Thousands of workers were laid off. And all this could have been avoided if defense officials had first surveyed the industry carefully, if they had transferred those plants turning out consumer goods into plants capable of turning out war materials; and if they had made sure that production was planned in such a way that no dislocation would take place to impede rather than spur on the fulfillment of war needs. *Or, in other words, if they had only asked the union, which knew the problem and knew the answers.*

What is true of copper is true of zinc, lead, bauxite, iron ore. From the experiences of the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers (see Joseph North's article, NEW MASSES, November 4), from reports of the United Automobile Workers and other unions, the ability of organized labor to help solve production problems cannot be doubted even though it is largely unacknowledged. Any detailed examination of strategic industries, such as the one being drawn up by the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers on copper, can only prove again that the unions are the key to the struggle for more and more supplies for our armed forces and for those nations now fighting the Nazis.

BRUCE MINTON.

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BRITISH CABINET CHANGES?

Claude Cockburn tells what is behind the talk of shifts in the Churchill government. Nazi propaganda and certain London connivers. D. N. Pritt's warning.

IT WAS startling to see the other day a report from the ordinarily well informed Istanbul correspondent of the London *Times* to the effect that Nazi propaganda was already making a great play with stories of an impending disruption of the British Cabinet, apparently to be started by the resignation of Halifax and Beaverbrook. The same message indicated that Nazi propaganda in neutral and occupied Europe and Asia Minor is doing its best to present a picture of an England in which there is only a right and a left, and in which the right is all in favor of doing as little as possible in the joint war with the Soviet Union, while only the left is demanding more vigorous action. At a moment when the question of possible Cabinet changes here is very much to the fore, it is necessary to say that this Nazi version of the situation is false in every particular and represents a sinister and significant distortion of the true state of affairs.

We have been certainly experiencing such an epidemic of "Cabinet making" as has not been seen in the lifetime of the present government. All sorts of people are busy with "candidates." It started with the "Anderson boom" a few weeks ago. That followed a meeting of the powerful Conservative committee which voted for Sir John Anderson (Anderson is the former Home Minister kicked upstairs to the Privy Council) as the best available successor to the present Prime Minister. Obviously such a vote could be a mere gesture of a quite innocuous kind. There is nothing to prevent anybody saying that if Churchill were to cease to be Prime Minister they would like to have so and so. Equally, such a vote can be—or can be used as—the starting point for a serious political intrigue.

It was notable that several days ago there suddenly appeared out of the blue in a small weekly sheet which has connections with certain elements in and around the government, a strange "boost" for Anderson, stressing his enormous abilities and his alleged lack of political ambition. One seemed almost to be reading the publicity matter that used to be put out for such persons as Stanley Baldwin. It goes without saying that all persons being touted for the highest posts by the ambitious interests of certain great industrial groups are discovered to be practically saint-like in their freedom from any personal ambition.

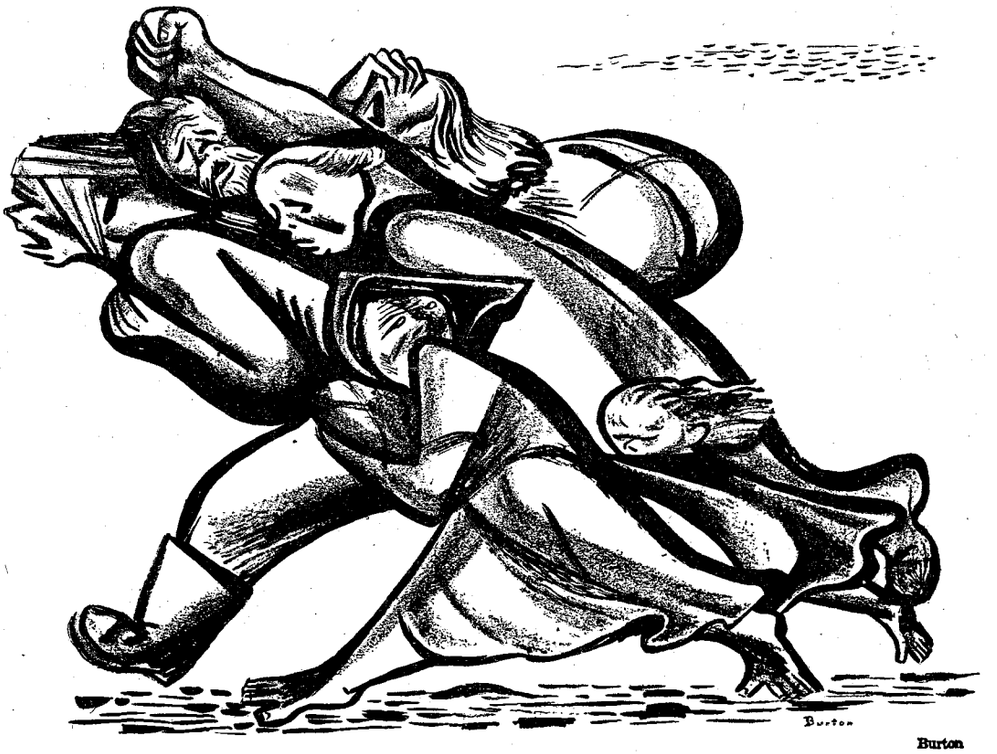
After that there was the rumpus about Beaverbrook's asthma, and his alleged intent to resign from the Ministry of Supply if not from the government altogether. So as not to add at this date to the rumors that are being touted in "well informed circles," I will only state that in my view it is not true that the story was put out by Beaverbrook himself. It is true that it came from a person in his entourage. But that is a very different matter. There are apt to be Trojan horses in some of the best regulated entourages. Following that, there was a persistent rumor of some new increase of political power for what is rudely referred to by the vulgar as "the Margesson gang," etc.

Small wonder then that D. N. Pritt, MP, speaking at a London demonstration of the People's Convention, is quoted by the *Sunday Express* as warning his audience against attempts that might be made to disrupt the Churchill government in order to establish a reactionary grip upon power and policy.

IT IS NOT WORTHWHILE at this stage to go into an elaborate investigation of the relative value of the hot political tips that are flying about. The point is that all this political speculation is going on with an openness and on a scale which would have been impossible a few months ago. That means two things. First, that the government has got itself into a position where its enemies—in particular certain elements in the right wing of the Conservative Party—are publicly lifting up their heads and hopefully sniffing the air. Secondly, it means that all those who desire to support and strengthen the Churchill government are awakening to the urgent need of carrying through an improvement of personnel, administrative machinery, and general policy.

And here we come to the point where the Nazi propaganda I have mentioned is completely and significantly wrong. Significantly because it reveals wishful thinking in Berlin, where there would be cause for rejoicing if the most powerful forces of British conservatism, in the widest sense of the word, actually faced with hostility a demand voiced only by the left for a stronger policy and strengthened government. It is true that there are powerful elements here who would, if they could, sabotage a really forward war policy. It is true that there are much wider forces which are delaying, and for the time being preventing, the opening of a second front against Hitler. It is equally true that a Hitler peace offensive is now well under way. What is not true is that these forces are anything but a minority so far as their political aims are concerned. In the matter of the second front, it is true that they are joined by far more numerous persons, including alleged experts of the kind who would always rather say no than yes to any audacious project, and who are of the type to regard any offensive action as out of the question unless and until its total success can be guaranteed in advance.

It is certainly significant that these rumblings on the extreme right should now be heard. Many warnings that this kind of thing would happen were uttered in the very first weeks of the Anglo-Soviet alliance. But, equally, these rumblings and danger signals have evoked a powerful response in renewed vigilance and activity on the part of those patriotic anti-fascist forces which form so huge a majority here. CLAUDE COCKBURN.



Burton

Refugees, a drawing

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HELSINKI BLACKMAIL

Finland's Petains and Darlans play their characteristic game of doubletalk. Diplomacy directed from Berlin. A. B. Magil discusses the not-so-strange antics of certain American groups.

SECRETARY HULL'S sharp statement calling on the Finnish government to end its war against the Soviet Union focuses attention on an issue that on various occasions in the past two years has evoked passionate debate among large sections of the American public. Today this issue takes on new meaning, since it is clear even to the political novice that it bears directly on our country's security. While certain newspapers still continue to chatter about "democratic Finland" and concoct fumbling apologies for the Finnish government's alliance with Nazi Germany, Secretary Hull's statement intimates, if only obliquely, that the king after all is naked, that Finland's role is today no different from that of Hitler's Italian, Rumanian, and Hungarian satellites. Hull's declaration is an important step toward ending an anomalous situation, toward carrying out the proclaimed policy of the British and American governments that our enemy's friend cannot be anything but our foe.

Though the Finnish government has, as this is written, not yet made a formal reply, it has not lacked for spokesmen. Playing Edgar Bergen, the Nazi government has answered in behalf of the Finns. A dispatch in the New York *Times* of November 5 reports that "The German Foreign Office spokesman formally rejected the note" (that is, Hull's statement). The Nazi spokesman embellished his blast with the familiar counterpoint about "Jewish gangsters from the ghettos of Washington." And Virginio Gayda added his squeak from Rome. There were also answering echoes from Hitler's American friends, appeasement senators and others. Herbert Hoover's statement deserves special note. This man who professes to abhor totalitarian aggression, who invokes moral judgments and protests his love of democracy, not only defends the Finnish government's alliance with Hitler on the ground that it is restoring its 1939 frontiers, but even justifies the seizure of territory which has been Soviet for years. It is as if Britain were to reopen the old issue of the Oregon boundary, which almost led to hostilities with the United States nearly a hundred years ago, and were to wage war on this country in order to extend the territory of Canada. And in his eagerness to help Hitler's helper, Hoover runs roughshod over elementary fact, telling us that the Finns two years ago "surrendered a third of their land to Russia"—though even the recently published official Blue-White Book of Finland states that only ten percent of the land was ceded. It might be added that the Soviet government, in return for Finnish territory which it needed to protect itself against the eventual Nazi attack, originally offered to give to Finland two and a half times as much land.

Two days after the Berlin and Hoover statements came an announcement by the Finnish radio that "Military operations are drawing to a close, as far as our country is concerned. Even though war goes on between great powers, Finland will not carry on any longer than is necessary for her own safety and defense. . . ." Later broadcasts repudiated this announcement and indicated that the Finnish government would flatly reject any peace with the Soviet Union. This is the sort of diplomatic doubletalk at which the Finnish White Guards are equalled, though not excelled, only by the Tokyo warlords. In fact, similar language was used by the "Socialist" Minister of Trade, Vaino A. Tanner, in a broadcast on September 14 on the eve of his departure for Berlin. In that speech he declared that though Finland had "good hopes of peace in the near future," it would not conclude a separate peace with the USSR "since the Soviet will lose the war with Germany." And on November 3 and 4 the North American Newspaper Alliance published interviews with Risto Ryti, president of Finland, and Premier J. W. Rangell, in which they sought to bamboozle the American public into thinking that Finland was pursuing an independent course and that its war aims were strictly limited.

What is the meaning of these ambivalent statements? They reflect the grave position of the Finnish regime both internally and externally. Finland is racked by a mounting internal crisis that antedates its present war. The overwhelming majority of the Finnish people are opposed to the alliance with Germany and want peace with the Soviet Union. As far back as Dec. 15, 1940, E. V. D. Wight, Jr. reported in the New York *Times* that eighty percent of the populations of Finland and Sweden "detest Nazism fervently." This opposition is being suppressed by force. The British Broadcasting Corp. on November 5 announced that following the United States' warning to Finland, demonstrations for peace took place in Helsinki and twenty-one persons were arrested. The BBC also reported that at a stormy meeting of the Finnish Social-Democratic Party the demand was made that Tanner resign from the Cabinet and refuse to accept responsibility for the government's policy. "There is no doubt that the government is bound hand and foot to the Nazis," the BBC stated. "But underground there is a strong hatred of the war."

A. Blashko

A UNITED PRESS DISPATCH from Stockholm on November 6 casts further light on the situation. It quotes Swedish observers as saying that "The more Finland is pressured by London and Washington . . . the more certain it is that Germany will not let Finland out, particularly since the northern offensives against Murmansk and Leningrad are still unfinished. It was believed that Finnish business circles would welcome an end of the war, but their opinion does not carry enough weight to affect the situation." In other words, the real ruler of Finland is not Ryti or Mannerheim, but Hitler. At the same time, within the limits of German dominance, the Finnish ruling class is undoubtedly attempting to maneuver—the squirming of an insect under glass. Hence the doubletalk. These tactics should be recognized, however, as a diplomatic holdup engineered by a gang of adventurers for whom the game is nearly up. For by talking both war and peace the Finnish Petains and Darlans are trying a threefold blackmail, designed to prevent the United States and Britain from taking active measures against Hitler's ally; to cajole the Soviet Union into relaxing its defensive efforts against Finnish aggression; and to secure from Germany economic concessions and a larger share of the loot. Objectively, however, it is Germany and Germany alone that gains from this adroit carrying of water on both shoulders. For even if the Finnish armies advance no farther than their present lines (as a matter of fact, they are preparing a joint offensive with the Nazis against the strategic ice-free port of Murmansk), they immobilize some fifteen Russian divisions and their materiel, lightening the task of the Nazi troops. And by similarly immobilizing American and British action against Finland (preventing, for example, a British attack on the Finnish Arctic port of Petsamo), the Helsinki Quislings likewise give direct aid to Hitler.

This same kind of stooging for Berlin permeates the recently published Finnish Blue-White Book which certain American newspapers hastened to embrace as gospel truth. This book purports to give a factual account of Soviet-Finnish relations since the conclusion

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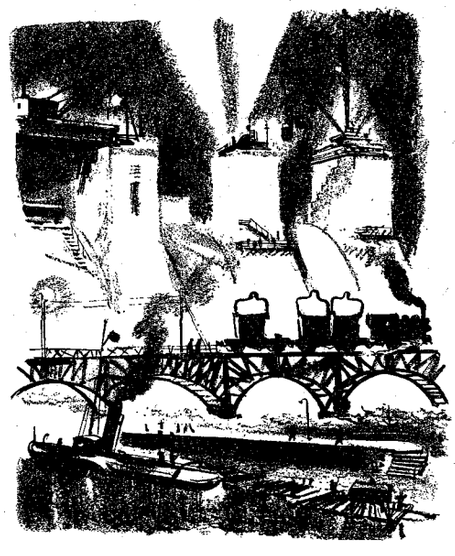
of peace in March 1940; actually it falsifies, suppresses, distorts. In his preface the Finnish Minister to Washington, Hjalmar J. Procope, writes: "It is now known to all the world that the Soviet Prime Minister Molotov last November stated in Berlin the Russian Communist government's intention to strike a final blow at Finland and liquidate her." The same charge was made by Risto Ryti in his broadcast of June 26 announcing Finland's particiation in the war against Russia. But neither Procope nor Ryti explained how this alleged statement of Molotov had become "known to all the world." They omitted to mention that they had lifted this canard from the proclamation of their "leader of genius," Adolph Hitler, when he launched his invasion of the Soviet Union. The reader will, however, recognize the term "leader of genius" as strictly original with the patriotic Ryti, who in that June 26 speech referred in this fashion to the man who has brought death and horror to millions. The entire American press published this passage in Ryti's speech. Though substantial extracts from Ryti's broadcast appear in the Finnish Blue-White Book, it is curious that this particular passage has been deleted. Why?

In his June 26 speech Ryti made a statement which hardly gibes with the present effort to depict Finland as pursuing an independent course. "Russia in this task," he said, "is facing a united front stretching from the White Sea to the Black Sea." This passage too is omitted from the bowdlerized version in the Finnish Blue-White Book. Nor has the Finnish government repudiated the tribute to "our superbly brave Finnish allies" in Hitler's order of the day announcing the October offensive on Moscow. Throughout the book there is a studied effort to conceal the true relations with Germany. The transit of German troops through Finland is declared by Procope to have been agreed to only after the Soviet Union compelled the Finnish government to permit the transit of Russian troops through the southern part of the country. For the uninformed reader this explanation may seem plausible. But look beneath the surface and Procope's trickery is evident. Under the Soviet-Finnish peace treaty the naval base of Hangoe, guarding the western approaches of the Gulf of Finland, was leased to the Soviet Union for thirty years and the USSR was "granted the right to maintain there at its own expense essential armed land and air forces." How could these forces be maintained unless they were transported through the southern part of Finland? "The actual traffic [that is, the movement of Soviet troops] began," according to the Blue-White Book, "on Sept. 25, 1940." But the book fails to mention that *the day before, the Finnish government announced that German troops were already in transit through Finland.* Furthermore, under international law it is one thing to allow the troops of a neutral to pass through the country, quite another thing to give this privilege to the soldiers of a belligerent. Needless to say, the Nazi troops did not merely pass through Finland. Large numbers of them remained to organize the attack on the USSR.

The same duplicity is evident in Minister Procope's explanation of Finland's entrance into the present war. He charges that on June 22 Russia "began to bomb and shell peaceful Finnish territory." It was not till June 25, he says, when "the Soviet forces launched a general attack upon the country," that Finland finally took up arms "to defend her country and her people." It is unfortunate for Prokope that he failed to get together with the "leader of genius" on this matter. For in his proclamation of June 22 Adolph Hitler announced: "Together with the Finns we stand from Narvik to the Carpathians." The fact is that far from being the innocent victims of Soviet machinations, the fascists in democratic dress at the head of the Finnish government plotted behind the backs of their own people against the peace treaty with the Soviet Union and against every effort to develop friendly relations. Their present role as Hitler's ally is the continuation by other means of the Ryti-Mannerheim politics of peace.

WHAT COURSE should America take toward Finland? Obviously, this is not merely a Russian issue, but one that deeply concerns our own country. If there is any criticism to be made of Secretary Hull's statement, it is that it did not come sooner and does not go far enough. For the fact is that among the American people the gilt on the myth of "democratic Finland" is just about rubbed off, and there is a growing disposition not merely to condemn Finland's present role, but to revaluate the entire Soviet-Finnish war of 1939-40. When the conservative St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* wrote on September 7: "The Russian Goliath did invade the Finnish David, but did so for its own protection against the Hitler invasion which it foresaw and which has now come to pass," it expressed the vast disillusionment of millions and their growing understanding not only of the present, but of the past. And when *PM* on July 5, in an article by Vaughan Henry, declared that "Finland has ceased to exist and function as an independent state, and is now administered as virtually a part of the Reich," it pointed clearly to America's duty in the matter.



THERE ARE, however, influential circles that persist in whitewashing the Finnish government and demanding exceptional treatment for Hitler's ally. Unfortunately, this attitude is not confined to the avowed appeasers. One of the worst offenders in this respect is the New York *Times* whose hatred of the Soviet Union is so great that it sometimes advocates policies that are detrimental not only to the majority of the American people, but to the capitalist class which is this newspaper's primary concern. In the three days after Secretary Hull's warning to Finland the *Times* published two editorials doing violence to both logic and our country's interests in order to extenuate Hitler's Finnish gauleiters. In the second editorial the *Times* for the first time conceded that "Finland's war against Russia helps Hitler" and that "It makes a Nazi victory in Russia more probable than it would otherwise be, and by that much it increases the threat to our own future." A clearcut statement. But far from drawing the inescapable conclusions from this in terms of American interests, the *Times* proceeded to make all kinds of spurious excuses for the Finnish government. It even went so far as to say that "We are aiding Russia today not because there is any moral choice between Hitler and Stalin, but because Nazi Germany is much stronger than Soviet Russia and incomparably the greater threat to ourselves." Are we to assume, then, that the gentlemen of the *Times* do not favor a victory over Hitlerism? Are we to assume that, once the Red Army begins driving back the Nazi hordes—as it will sooner or later—the *Times* will demand all-out aid to Hitler? Would the *Times* just as readily have Hitler—or his Japanese henchmen—in control of Siberia, within rowboat distance of American soil in Alaska, as have the status quo maintained there? Merely to ask these questions is to show how untenable and ridiculous is the *Times'* position.

THERE IS NO DOUBT that it is this attitude among certain capitalist groups, reflecting narrow class prejudice against the USSR, that is in great part responsible for the contradictions in our government's anti-Hitler policy, expressed not only in the relations with Finland, but with Vichy, Franco Spain, and Japan. Such attitudes weaken the world struggle against the Hitler menace, weaken the defense of our own country. It is time to stop nursing the potent lies that paralyze action. It is time to give Hitler's man Procope and all Finnish diplomatic and commercial representatives their walking papers. Lord Beaverbrook described Finland as part of "the greatest gathering of savage powers the world has ever known . . . banded together in murder, theft and arson. . . ." That is sober truth. It is time for both the United States and Britain to act on it.

A. B. MAGIL.

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WHO IS HOLDING UP PRICE CONTROL?

After months of delay, the House Banking and Currency Committee proposes a bill which protects prices against consumers and inflation against control. Representative Steagall's shenanigans.

"CONGRESS wants some flexible control that will let prices flex *upward.*" Those words, from Kiplinger's *Washington Letter,* circulated privately to businessmen, sum up a story of shameless maneuvers by a few congressmen designed to take price control out of government hands and turn it over to the profiteers. The Kiplinger letter was dated Saturday, November 1. That same day members of the House Banking and Currency Committee met in extraordinary session behind closed doors to vote on the administration's plea for price control legislation. They had before them a draft of a bill which sought to protect consumers against runaway prices and to control inflationary trends. They voted out a bill which, in effect, protects prices against the consumers and inflation against control.

Leon Henderson, adroit at calling the turn while fellow government economists are still fumbling, gave sharp warnings of the need for price control in a speech at Atlantic City last July 14. At the President's request a bill written by several administration experts was introduced in the House and soon referred to the Banking and Currency Committee whose chairman is Henry B. Steagall, poll-tax representative from (Ozark) Alabama—where Cong. Hobbs and Starnes come from. While prices steadily advanced through summer and fall, the committee toyed with the problem; took a four-week vacation and many shorter ones; allowed word to get out to the effect that commodity prices are still too low, wages much too high; questioned Henderson closely as to whether he and his staff are "Reds." By August food was up ten percent and living costs almost as much, and the prices of major commodities in general were twenty-five percent higher than they were the first of the year.

BUT despite administration prodding there was one delay after another from the committee. The hurriedly convened meeting on Saturday morning was timed to squeeze full advantage from the fact that the President had gone to Hyde Park, House leaders were out of town, and two stalwart New Dealers were also away from the capital. In the absence of these restraining influences, and in secret session that lasted through the day and far into the evening, Chairman Steagall and his colleagues scuttled Henderson's plans. The bill they finally voted out substituted for the badly needed rigid ceiling on commodity prices a flexible ceiling on farm prices. By provisions inviting farm prices to rise an additional twenty to thirty percent over their present rough parity levels (parity being the price at which farm commodities attain the same purchasing power they had in the five years prior to the last war), price control actually was twisted into a means of price inflation. Even farm groups were shocked; maintenance of average parity prices was all that they had sought.

Under the roofless ceiling devised by the House Committee, not only are farm prices given a boot upward, but the prices of processed farm products—cotton and wool and hides manufactured into clothing and shoes, flour baked into bread, etc.—are to be allowed to rise as well. Rich opportunities are thus provided for speculative profiteering in the day-to-day needs of life. It may be expected that, as always, the burden of price rises sanctioned by the bill will fall on lowest income groups and the bulk of the profits will go to speculators and processors rather than to producers.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE figures illustrate the possibilities opened up by the committee's defiance of consumer needs. Unless drastic revisions are made during debate on the bill, the consumer will have to dig deeper into his pocket to pay five cents a pound additional for cotton, ten cents for wool, proportionately more for eggs, butter, bread, meat, potatoes, and a wide range of articles of clothing. And while an increase in living costs was being written into the bill, valuable consumer safeguards were being struck out. Thrown away also was the enforcement machinery contrived by Henderson and his aide David Ginsburg.

Will the mutilated bill become law? Circumstances make it hard to guess. The administration is on a spot. Further delay may only make matters worse, and price inflation proceeds at an accelerated pace. Some sentiment has therefore been developed for acceptance of the bill despite its outrageous provisions. Four months have already been lost and there is the possibility that the House will soon begin its series of short recesses planned to extend through Christmas. However, it is now clear that the administration and progressive forces will put up a stiff battle to over-ride the committee's tampering. Pressure now being applied, if sufficiently backed up by labor and consumer insistence, may force the committee to reconsider and prepare a more satisfactory substitute.

It has been persuasively suggested that the amended price control bill may have been deliberately made as unpalatable as possible to strengthen the bargaining power of those who are determined to control wages. Such schemes as the "Baruch Plan," the "Gore Plan," or the "Canadian Plan," are being constantly urged on Congress and the White House. Indeed, the House Committee is said to be ready to agree to drop the bill's elastic price ceiling feature if a non-elastic ceiling can be put over wages. This is the dream of industry, the battle cry of the National Association of Manufacturers and the US Chamber of Commerce.

Industrialists concede in talk among themselves that labor will make great gains in the coming year. They expect the spread of closed shop agreements. Rising costs of living and greater bargaining strength for labor will then make it impossible to resist proper wage increases—unless the government can be persuaded to come to the rescue of undiminished profits by freezing wages at present levels. That is the point of the well organized campaign being waged by lobbyists in Washington and everywhere by the press.

If a functioning price control system were now in operation, there would be little or no justification for the drastic check-off tax proposals brought forward by the Treasury last week. Seldom has a tax plan rested on a flimsier basis. It is true that price control measures alone might not be sufficient to ward off price inflation, without more adequate taxation and other steps such as those proposed in "We Can Beat Inflation" (NEW MASSES, October 28). But the primary job of defense taxation ought to be the financing of an ever-expanding program to defeat Hitler. The cost of combating fascism ought to come in fair share through the recapture of swollen corporation profits, and of excessive salaries and bonuses. Taxation should not be relied on as a means of curtailing purchasing power.

The 1942 tax law already places disproportionate burdens on poorly-paid wage earners while providing loopholes through which this year's record corporation profits are slipping away. The Treasury's new plan to have employers make weekly deductions from all pay envelopes, small and large, as an *additional* tax of as much as fifteen percent on wages, will mean a little less profit for the few and much less bread and butter for everybody else. If there are further delays in obtaining effective limitations on soaring prices, then there will be still less bread and no butter. There ought to be a law.

JULIAN WEBB.

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NEGROES IN DEFENSE INDUSTRY

What the President's Committee on Fair Employment Practices found in West Coast aircraft and shipbuilding plants. The battle against discrimination toward Negro workers.

Los Angeles.

"DOES your company discriminate against Negroes?"

"No, sir."

"How many men do you employ?"

"Two thousand, eight hundred and eighty."

"How many of those are Negroes?"

"Two."

"When were they hired?"

"Today."

The above is from hearings held last month in Los Angeles by the President's Committee on Fair Employment Practice. And it typifies the attitude of key employers in this area toward the idea of bringing different national groups into national defense industries. Even though it is four months since President Roosevelt issued Executive Order No. 8802 calling for "full participation in the defense program of all persons, regardless of race, creed, color or national origin . . .," West Coast employers have done practically nothing to heed the White House order.

There has been a "token hiring" of two Negroes out of nearly 3,000 workers by the Bethlehem Shipbuilding Co.; fifty-four out of 50,000 by Lockheed; ten in 33,000 by Douglas; eight in 12,500 by North American. Comparable hiring figures for Jews, Mexicans, and Japanese were also indicated at the Los Angeles hearings. Aircraft and shipbuilding employers almost invariably denied to the committee that they had practiced any discrimination in hiring. Their subterfuges were ludicrous. Thus Randall Irwin of Lockheed Aircraft, while admitting that his company had never hired Negroes until after the President's order, insisted that: "We haven't changed our policy; we've adopted a policy."

The three main excuses for not employing Negroes and other groups were:

1. Few such individuals apply for jobs. (A natural enough consequence of habitual discrimination.)

2. Those applying are simply less skilled than the men who are hired.

3. White workers object to the contact with other workers whose skins are not white.

While some evidence of discrimination against Negroes by AFL unions was produced, the real blame, it was always shown, lay with certain AFL officials or anachronistic regulations. In San Francisco, for example, several skilled Negro mechanics who had been hired for shipbuilding work were refused "union clearance" by the Machinists' (AFL) local, which had a closed shop contract. And in Seattle Machinist officials had countermanded a decision of the rank and file to allow the employment of Negroes at the Boeing plant.

However, these were isolated cases. Other evidence showed conclusively that the employers' alleged fear of trouble between workers of different races was utterly without foundation. Philip ("Slim") Connelly, head of the Los Angeles industrial union council, described the harmonious inter-racial relations in CIO unions, the result of a pronounced policy against discrimination. In a local of the International Longshoremen and Warehousemen's Union, Connelly related, a white member was expelled for refusing to work with a Negro. Bert Corona, president of the ILWU local in question, stated in confirmation of this:

"We find that most discrimination is company inspired."

This well-established fact found a cogent expression in the words of C. E. Pearl, local head of the National Negro Congress:

"The bottleneck of Negro employment is the employer."

PEARL ARGUED that jobs were the only answer to charges of discrimination, and demanded that prompt employment in defense plants be given 5,000 Negroes in this locality, i.e., a number proportionate to their population. He told of his organization's experiences in fighting the job blockade. Lockheed had sarcastically suggested that the Negro Congress "build a plant and get subcontracts," while Vultee had baldly admitted its prejudice, stating that "it is not the policy of this company to employ people other than of the Caucasian race."

Though Gerald Tuttle, president of Vultee, maintained that his company's attitude had since changed, he was forced to admit on cross-examination that not a single Negro was on his company's payroll. Mark F. Ethridge, chairman of the hearings, termed this "prima facie evidence of discrimination." Tuttle was reminded by commitee member David Sarnoff that:

"Hitler said the Aryan race was the superior race. But scientists have shown that there is no such thing as an Aryan race. If they do the same with the Caucasian race, you may find yourself without any workers at all in your plant!"

ALL EMPLOYERS testifying maintained that their hiring was done strictly on the basis of "qualifications"—i.e., "employment background and training." But witnesses indicated the operation of a "vicious circle" in this regard. How could members of minority groups obtain "employment background" when they couldn't get jobs? As for "training," even public schools discourage attendance by the unwanted groups on the ground that they won't be hired in industry anyway. If a Negro or a Japanese does succeed in breaking through these restrictions, there are always other, more subtle ways, to prevent his being placed.

A case in point was that of Cornelius T. Anderson, brother of Eddie Anderson, the "Rochester" of radio and screen fame. Anderson had had sixteen years' radio-mechanical experience and yet had been unsuccessful in obtaining a job at Lockheed where 1,000 men, the vast majority of them unskilled or semi-skilled, are hired weekly.

After a long wait Anderson obtained an interview with the personnel office. His "papers" were brought in. They were sealed. Evidently the case had been dropped. The official broke the seal and across the top of the papers which he drew out of the folio was

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written in large red letters the word "COLORED." (Randall Irwin, Lockheed's industrial relations chief, later insisted that this designation was meant to ensure that "the Negro applicant would receive special attention"—a statement with an inadvertent double-meaning which made the audience laugh.)

A most friendly conversation followed, Anderson reported, in which the official informed him that Lockheed had no present need for his type of skill.

"You wouldn't be interested in a janitor's job, would you?" the personnel man asked.

"Since I can't get anything else at present, I'd be willing to work as a janitor," Anderson replied. To which the Lockheed official quickly retorted:

"Well, it so happens that we aren't even hiring janitors now!"

Irwin explained daintily that the complexities of personnel work, if understood properly, could account for all the cases brought forward. He told of his company's "highly selective" hiring routine which consisted of three written tests of over 300 questions and three oral interviews.

"In hiring a man the first requisite that we look for, and the major requirement, is the man's attitude or temperament," he explained. "He must have a healthy outlook on life and be well adapted to work with a large group of individuals."

Sarnoff, remarking that the company seemed to require "the perfect man," added that this complicated battery of tests might merely be a disguise for unfair hiring practices. Recently Irwin told officers of the machinists' local in his plant that they need not be overly concerned about President Roosevelt's anti-discrimination order. A Negro applicant would be required to obtain the highest ratings in all three tests while whites could get by with a mere passing grade in two of the three examinations.

HEARTBREAKING STORIES were told by witness after witness, most of them skilled workers, of attempts to crash through these hiring barriers. A stalwart American of German descent was found unworthy of a custodian's job in one of the plants despite a two-year record on the fighting front in the last war and an "excellent discharge." A Jewish chap, born in Brooklyn and as American as the Dodgers, with 175 hours' training in riveting, underwent an incredible six-month runaround while trying to hurdle the so-called "second-generation-American" requirement often demanded by defense employers here.

A year ago such roundabout methods of exclusion were not deemed necessary. In July 1940, for instance, NYA, the California relief administration, and the aircraft companies reached an agreement on training for employment in these plants—strictly on the terms of the employers!

"Specifically barred from participation in this program," reported David Coleman of the B'nai B'rith, "were Jewish, Portuguese, Negro, and Mexican youths." Only strong protests forced the employers and public officials to cancel this invidious agreement.

Another significant case was that of Susumiu Yenari, an American-born Japanese youth with a year and a half of schooling in aeronautical engineering who had stood fourth from the top in a civil service examination. Nevertheless Yenari could not "qualify" for work in the aircraft plants where such training is so precious today.

"Are you working now?" he was asked.

"No, I'm being inducted into the army."

"When were you called up?"

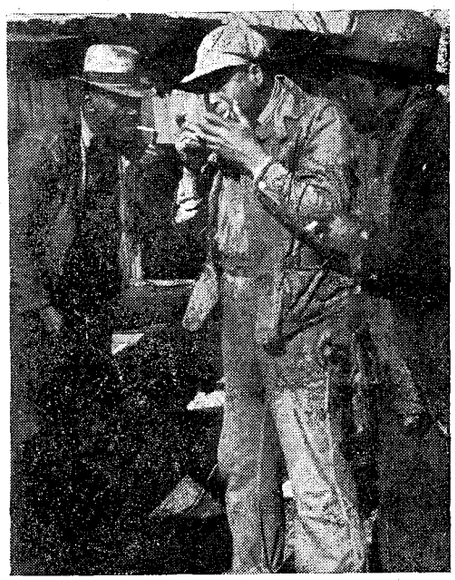
"Today, but they put it off till tomorrow because I had to testify."

The impact of the unexpected reply caused a murmur to pass through the large audience at the hearing. The country was asking these young people to be prepared for any sacrifice. Yet many employers were not giving them a chance at jobs for which they were eminently qualified. Discrimination in defense industries is of crucial importance for the entire nation. Skilled labor is one of the chief bottlenecks in our great battle for production. Here, especially in the aircraft plants, which have grown at a tremendous pace, one hears repeatedly how the lack of trained men is slowing down output. The solution is not to give skilled men jobs as janitors. The only answer is the full use of all our resources—in materials, machines, and especially in men.

YET, DESPITE the preponderantly negative side of the hearings there were some bright features. The mere existence of the committee, the public airing of the problem—these were to the good. Over 200 members of minority groups were profoundly interested and often enthusiastic spectators at the sessions.

The great interest in the hearings was apparent from the large number of witnesses representing interested organizations. These included, besides the ones I have already mentioned, the Urban League, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, African Methodist Episcopal Conference, Employment Office for American Indians, Japanese-American Citizens' League, and Latin American spokesmen. The county council of the American Legion addressed a letter to the committee declaring that racial discrimination in defense industry was a threat to "our present national objective, which is the defeat of Hitler and all that he stands for."

The two Negro members of the six-man committee—Earl B. Dickerson, Chicago alderman, and Milton P. Webster, vice president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters—were the committee's sharpest examiners. Dickerson, particularly, slashed through the generalities of the employer representatives. Always he demanded definite assurances of a change of heart and policy.



"Will you hire Negroes today?" he asked repeatedly. Or: "If I send down a group of Negroes to your plant, will you put them to work on the same basis as you would whites?"

One of Dickerson's chief aims was to force the employers to put themselves on record as a first step toward ending their untenable practices. As a result Negroes, Mexicans, and others will feel definitely encouraged to make new attempts at obtaining defense jobs.

When it was impossible, after lengthy questioning, to get a straightforward pledge from an employer, Dickerson would sharply warn: "Unless you hire Negroes in the near future we'll consider your statement of policy as so many words!"

The presence of each member of the committee appeared to have a special significance. There were, besides Dickerson and Webster: Frank Fenton of the AFL, John Brophy of the CIO, David Sarnoff, a leading industrialist and a Jew, and Mark Ethridge, publisher of the Louisville *Courier-Journal*.

People who attended the hearings in Los Angeles were impressed by the committee's earnestness and directness. The scope of its work should be broadened, and its program must be implemented by strong legislative measures. Chairman Ethridge's introductory remarks at the opening session of the hearings are worth some hard thought on the part of defense employers: "We cannot afford to play Hitler's game of indulging in racism and prejudices while we are attempting to destroy him."

BERT TALCOTT.

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HERR LINDBERGH'S KAMPF

Confessions of the spokesman for "America First." How he helped Hitler move westward. His services for the Munich cabal. Foreign policy of the appeasers.

A DEFINITELY elegiac note is beginning to creep into Mr. Lindbergh's speeches, a remembrance of things past. This is a strange phenomenon for a young man with apparently so much of a promising career still ahead of him. Yet this theme of recollection, of surveying the past was unmistakable in his recent speech at Madison Square Garden, New York. It is as though the distinguished flyer has been assembling his notes for another *Mein Kampf*. All that is lacking now would be the necessary confinement at some fortress like Landsberg.

Consider, for example, Mr. Lindbergh's rumination about the year 1938, the events that led to Munich. It was always well known that the flyer had played a large part in making Munich possible, but this had never been fully documented. Now Mr. Lindbergh himself has supplied the documents in the form of his own speech. It is a real mouthful.

In his extensive travels in the thirties, he tells us, he was much impressed with Germany's might. "I therefore advocated that England and France build their military forces with the utmost rapidity, but that they permit Germany to expand eastward into Russia without declaring war. As you know," Lindbergh concludes, "the opposite school of thought prevailed."

But the ex-colonel is very unkind to the memory of Neville Chamberlain's hospitality. He does a crude injustice to his former friends in London and Paris if he thinks they failed to follow his advice. On the contrary, they certainly did. And that was just the trouble. Three years ago, this past October, at the Munich meetings, they permitted Germany to expand eastward without declaring war. They broke their commitments to Czechoslovakia. They rebuffed the Soviet Union. They dynamited the last foundations of collective security. For many months after Munich, they continued to give Hitler somewhat frantic "go-ahead" signals. In fact, even after the formal declaration of war, they continued their efforts to have the Germans go eastward. Thereby, they shattered the defenses of France and brought Britain to the abyss of invasion in the summer of 1940.

Those "thousands of the finest men of France and England" whose "defeat and death" Mr. Lindbergh laments were sent to their defeat and death by the advice of an American—a man who was wandering through Europe intervening in other people's lives—a certain Charles A. Lindbergh. The guilt of the catastrophe is as much his as that of every other Munichman. It was *his* policy of "expanding Germany eastward" which brought about a debacle. Had "opposite schools of thought prevailed," things might have been different. Many people realize that today who did not see it at the time. Walter Lippmann, for instance, who, together with Dorothy Thompson, was among the first to riddle Mr. Lindbergh's latest speech.

ON CLOSER EXAMINATION, it appears that the spokesman for the America First Committee is directing his complaints in the wrong direction. His advice *was* followed in London and Paris; the trouble is that it *wasn't* followed in Berlin. Lindbergh was the victim of an optical illusion. He thought Hitler was going eastward, whereas in fact, Hitler was going westward. Hitler had a very high regard for the colonel's advice only in so far as it misled the western nations. He had no intention of accepting these expert judgments as far as German policy was concerned. Hitler placed the "Order of the German Eagle" on the flyer's sleeve. But when the ceremony was over, the Nazis laughed up their own sleeves.

As a matter of fact, Lindbergh has made something of a habit of misreading Hitler's mind. I am not trying to suggest that the distinguished flyer is out of step with the goose-steppers, but the record shows some woeful discrepancies between Lindbergh's judgments and Hitler's. In 1938 Lindbergh assured Britain and France that Germany was going east if only they did nothing about it; whereupon Germany went west. In the winter of 1940 Lindbergh told the American people that Britain was finished, a victim of German superiority in the air, defeated and beyond help. But at exactly the same period, Hitler was coming to diametrically different conclusions. In his proclamation of June 22, Hitler explained that a victory over the British could not be vouchsafed by his High Command *"particularly as regards aircraft"*—so long as the Soviet Union was there.

To defeat Britain (whose defeat Lindbergh regarded as past discussion) Hitler felt it necessary to attack the Soviet Union. To smash the Soviet Union, as Hitler told his armies this October, was the only way of smashing Britain, and with her the United States.

It seems, therefore, that Mr. Lindbergh's judgment of the situation in 1938 was disastrous. His judgment of the situation in 1941 was refuted by Hitler himself. Lindbergh may follow the advice the Nazis give to him, but it is a sure thing they do not follow his advice to them. They merely are grateful for the advice he gives to their enemies.

ANOTHER PASSAGE in that Madison Square Garden speech has even greater pertinence for the present, even though it appears to deal with the past. "Whether or not Germany would have turned west after conquering Russia is debatable. But even if she had done so, Germany would have faced a far stronger England and France," says our hero.

The Inquiry Begins

WE TRUST that the Washington grand jury which is investigating Nazi propaganda will not overlook Charles A. Lindbergh. It is doubtful whether any paid agent of Hitler in this country has surpassed his services to the Nazi cause. The grand jury has already encountered the ex-flyer's name while looking into the mysterious activities of *Scribner's Commentator*, spokesman for Lindbergh and unofficial organ of the America First appeasers. During the past week newspaper reports indicated that the grand jury heard substantially the same story which John L. Spivak told in the October 14 issue of NEW MASSES—the strange tale of the secret office on the sixth floor of the Ford Motor Co. building, 1710 Broadway, New York, where hundreds of thousands of letters received by Lindbergh, Rep. Hamilton Fish, former Sen. Rush Holt, Rev. Charles Coughlin, and other appeasers were coded and names and addresses filed. The two women named by Spivak as having been in charge of this work, Bessie Feagin, editorial secretary of *Scribner's Commentator*, and Gladys La Vance, Ford employee, both testified before the grand jury. Miss Feagin proved to be suffering from a serious case of loss of memory, and it was found necessary to take her before a District of Columbia Supreme Court judge.

The grand jury also issued subpenas for two gentlemen whom Spivak exposed, Douglas M. Stewart, publisher, and George T. Eggleston, editor of *Scribner's Commentator*. Both, according to Spivak, were closely associated with William Rhodes Davis, wealthy oil man who in October 1939 acted as a Nazi emissary, bringing to this country a secret so-called peace plan initialed by Goering.

Representative Fish has managed temporarily to escape testifying through invoking congressional immunity. Fish's secretary, George Hill, has already been indicted for perjury by the grand jury. He has been accused of being over-friendly with George Sylvester Viereck, notorious Nazi agent now under indictment for failure to report to the State Department all his propaganda activities. Hill is also said to have received $12,000 during the past five months from some mysterious source. Assistant Attorney General William P. Maloney charged that Hill was "the key man in Washington" in distributing appeasement literature under congressional frank, which activity was "masterminded by German agents."

The grand jury hearings and the revelations made by NEW MASSES and other publications indicate that behind the appeasement smoke of the America First Committee and its allies there are more than a few Nazi sparks. A congressional investigation, before these Hitlerite activities go any further, is very much in order.

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"Well, try it on anyway, Herr Fuehrer."

In this passage, if you think about it, Lindbergh is saying two main things: first, that if Germany is *today* permitted to attack Russia unopposed by Britain and the United States, it "is debatable" whether Germany will then turn against us. Second, he is implying that if Germany does turn against us, it might then be time to fight.

Let's take both ideas. Today, Hitler appears to be fighting exclusively against Russia, but actually Hitler is fighting the western nations just as much as when he was permitted to overrun Czechoslovakia, a "faraway nation of whom we know so little," in Chamberlain's phrase. The crux of the present war, of the last four months is precisely this: Hitler is fighting one enemy at a time: actually, he is striking at them all. He is trying to kill many birds with the same stone. He knows damn well that if he can smash the Soviet armies, he can smash any armies; if he can exploit Soviet resources, he can defy any blockade; if he can break across the Caucasian plains to the Caspian, he can outflank the entire Middle East, the gateways of the British Empire; if he can humble the USSR, he humbles the democratic idea in every country; and if he can do all these things, the Japanese will do the rest in the Pacific. Then, America would be really isolated.

Hitler is therefore fighting us today just as much as he is fighting the Russians. Whoever thinks the war is being fought in some faraway country whose fate does not concern us is the victim of an optical illusion. It is the same mirror trick by which Lindbergh helped to bring catastrophe in western Europe two years ago.

As for the second idea the America Firsters, and many whom they influence, comfort us with the thought that if we do nothing for Russia, or a bare minimum, we shall be in a stronger position to fight Hitler in case he turns from the East. The assumption is that someday, somewhere we shall be able to fight if Hitler turns around and tackles us.

But if we are going to fight—when will it be easier to defeat the enemy—today, or after he has licked both Britain and Russia? Which is the easier struggle for us—the one we conduct together with powerful land and sea forces on and around the continent—or the one we might have to conduct alone, isolated, encircled? What general in our army, or admiral in our navy really believes we can do a better job against a victorious fascist cabal, than can be done by the Russians, the British, and ourselves against a much weaker cabal today? What government official is willing to stake our national destiny on Hitler's promises to Lindbergh as against the common sense of that old American proverb: United we stand, divided we fall?

But, really, too rigorous an examination of Mr. Lindbergh's logic does him more injustice than he deserves. The truth is that America First does not really intend to fight Hitler at all—now, or in the "debatable" eventuality that he turns against us later on. Their vaunted interest in making America strong is sheer humbug.

And the proof lies in the behavior of America First toward the attack on the *Kearny* and the sinking of the *Reuben James*.

Evidently, Hitler has not waited until the end of the Russian campaign; he is already attacking the United States in its own defensive waters. Hitler himself has acknowledged the indivisibility of this war—while his armies are trying to determine the destiny of Britain and America on the battlefields of Russia, his submarines have already launched upon an invasion of our continental waters. The America First Committee promised to fight if that should ever happen. But they have not uttered the merest word of criticism against Hitler's submarine warfare. On the contrary, their criticism has been directed against the President and the administration; they have offered the arguments which the Nazis themselves use to extenuate their piracy on the seas. Thus, America First reveals that its presumed intention to defend our shores at some future time is sheer hypocrisy. The time is at hand, and it is not America First which issues the call to arms. It is America First which does all in its power to keep the country from replying to Hitler in the only language he understands.

It was in a previous speech at Fort Wayne, Ind., in which Lindbergh defended his speech-making of the past two years by the remarkable assertion: "I do not know of a single statement I have made that has been proved false."

This might have been the best text for beginning a discussion of Lindbergh's ideas. But perhaps it's the best text for ending it, too.

JOSEPH STAROBIN.

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CAVALRY TO THE FRONT

Colonel T. discusses the activity of Red Army horsemen when the weather curtails the use of mechanized equipment. The superiority of the Cossack and the Kalmyk. The Russian cavalry tradition.

THE dispatches of the last week or so have disclosed that Soviet cavalry has been in action both on the Moscow front and in the Crimea. It is very possible and even probable that cavalry will be destined to play an ever-increasing role in the winter conditions of the Eastern Front. The first pertinent question, therefore, is the quantitative and qualitative relationship between the German and the Soviet cavalries.

At the beginning of this war the German army had only two and one-half divisions of cavalry. This dearth of mounted troops was explained partly by lack of horses (a flimsy excuse), and partly by the overwhelming "mechanical trend" in the Wehrmacht. At present it is more than probable that the number of German cavalry divisions has been increased but they certainly do not even approach the Red Army's thirty-five or forty cavalry divisions. Even assuming that a goodly number is stationed in the Far East, we can safely say that about twenty-five Red cavalry divisions are at the disposal of the High Command on the Eastern Front. The ratio between German and Soviet cavalry (in numbers) is probably at least one to three.

There is no way of knowing about the latest organizational changes in a Soviet cavalry division, but we can get an approximate idea of these divisions from the Soviet Cavalry Manual of 1933. This is the structure the manual gives for a cavalry division:

Cavalry Regiments—4 (20 squadrons and 4 batteries of small guns).

Artillery Regiments—1 (6 batteries of field guns).

Mechanized units (*divizionnes,* which means units larger than squadrons, but smaller than regiments)—1 (3 squadrons).

Signal *divizionne*—1 (2 squadrons).

Squadrons of Engineers—1.

Machine guns on carriages drawn by 4 horses (*tachankas*)—48.

All this, with various auxiliary units, consists of 3,701 men, 3,533 horses, and forty-two fighting machines (tanks and armored cars).

It can be seen then that the Red Army probably has about 100,000 horsemen in readiness on the Soviet-German front. This mounted army is backed by light tanks, armored cars, and all kinds of light and medium artillery; it is saturated with a huge number of automatic weapons. Every eight men in a cavalry squadron are equipped with a light machine gun or a grenade thrower.

NOW, as to the respective qualities of German and Soviet cavalry. The experience of the first world war showed that the Russian cavalry was superior to the German. The German horsemen seldom could withstand (and seldom accepted) the shock of a Russian cavalry charge. The German cavalry seldom undertook daring maneuvers of its own. It usually preferred to act in close proximity to its infantry, "holding on to the infantry's skirts," while the Russians often operated scores of miles ahead of any infantry support. (A notable exception was the so-called Sventziany breakthrough, when the success of General von Garnier's cavalry corps

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in effecting a deep breakthrough can be credited to the unbelievable ineptitude of two czarist cavalry commanders, Generals Kaznakov and Tiulin. They simply ran away from battle, although they had very able troops at their disposal in Kaznakov's First Guards Cavalry Division.)

It may be said that the inherent "dash" of the Russian cavalry is in great part due to tradition. Many Russians and other peoples inhabiting the USSR have for generations been herdsmen of the plains. They are natural horsemen, practically born in the saddle.

Germany, however, lacks the expanse necessary for evolving a nation of horsemen. Good as the German horse show teams may be, the horsemen were and remain "Sunday riders." On the other hand, the Cossack, the Kalmyk, the Kirghiz, and many other (especially eastern) nationalities of the Soviet Union are "fulltime riders" with generations of experience behind them. The Russian Civil War, which included large cavalry operations, greatly added to the experience of the Red Army in that respect and helped build a modern cavalry on an old traditional base.

The above comparison between the German and the Russian cavalries is borne out, for instance, by the following excerpt from a German officer's book:

". . . In about three-quarters of an hour Cossacks appeared, reconnoitering carefully, taking advantage of every fold of the ground. I must admit that I clearly saw how much our cavalry could learn from these sons of the steppes. Three squadrons of them had already accumulated when I opened fire. In less than three minutes they had vanished behind some kind of cover which I could not even see. . . ." (Von Poseck, *The German Cavalry in Lithuania and Kurland in 1915,* page 97.)

The question now arises as to whether cavalry can still be used in modern war, and whether or not it will be used to advantage in winter conditions. As long as the motor, which particularly displaced the horse, cannot consume things that are found almost everywhere (such as grass and water), as long as the motor and the thing it propels remain comparatively noisy, and as long as mechanical engines of war cannot pass where a horse can—wars will create situations where cavalry can be highly useful. Generally speaking, cavalry will appear on the scene when mechanical equipment for one reason or another cannot be supplied with fuel and when conditions of terrain (woods, ravines, mountain trails, etc.) and footing (mud, slush, etc.) make it impossible or too difficult for such equipment to move.

In such a contingency the cavalry may resume its role of a maneuvering shock force, a role which was usurped by the motomechanized branch of the service. Nowadays cavalry will resume this function under vastly changed conditions because it has been endowed with special weapons that give it a high degree of fire power which it lacked twenty-five years ago. Then a cavalry regiment had only ordinary rifles, pistols, and a few machine guns. A Soviet cavalry division has carriage-mounted machine guns which can fire in motion (to the flanks and rear), a great assortment of light machine guns and grenade throwers, and also field-, anti-tank-, and anti-aircraft artillery.

CAVALRY, of course, retains its shock power not only because of the horse's speed and the combined mass of rider and horse, but also because of the moral effect which a wave of galloping, shouting, slashing horsemen produces upon men who, because they are on foot, are considerably less fast, less "tall," and less "heavy" than the onrushing centaurs. (Here we compare the foot soldier with the "unit" consisting of man and horse.)

The principal functions of cavalry are to: (1) screen and reconnoiter; (2) raid the enemy rear and communications; and (3) pursue a beaten and retreating enemy. During the coming winter Soviet cavalry will most probably engage in the second category of activity, i.e., raid the enemy rear, mostly in conjunction with guerrilla action. In order to raid the enemy rear one naturally has to break through the enemy front first. This is possible either where the front is not continuous or where the terrain is such that it is difficult to cover the entire line with observers either from the ground or from the air.

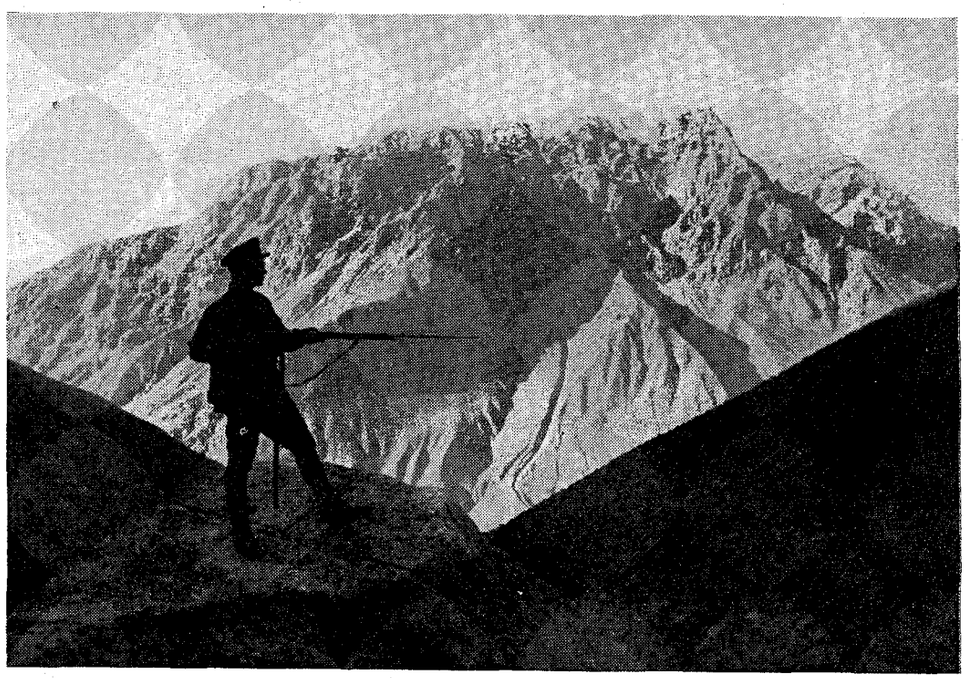
Mountains and forests offer an excellent opportunity for such action. But will cavalry action in mountains and forests be possible in winter? The answer is based on the past record of the cavalry.

Here are a few examples taken at random. During the Sarakamysh operation on the Turkish front in December 1914, the Siberian Cossack Brigade marched seventy miles in thirty hours in fairly deep snow, and captured Ardahan to cap the march. During the Erzerum operation (winter 1915-16) the Russian cavalry operated in the mountains when the snow was over three feet deep and the temperature as low as forty degrees below zero (F). In March 1921, the Eighteenth Red Cavalry Division, pursuing the Georgian Menshevik troops who had retreated to Batum, forced the Godher Pass (between Ahaltsykh and Batum) which had been considered impassable heretofore between November and May. This is how it was done: the felt capes *(burkhas)* of the entire division were collected and laid out on the trail like a carpet. Over this carpet the horses were led. After the mounted units had passed, the snow was so well trampled that field artillery could follow. Another example: at the end of 1919 Budenny's Cavalry Corps attacked and defeated two White Cavalry Corps at Kastornaya during a terrific snowstorm.

Thus we see that history shows us that cavalry action on a large scale is possible both in winter and in the mountains. Knowing that the masses of Soviet cavalry are there, waiting for an opportunity to strike when the German moto-mechanized divisions are immobilized and the German rear has been "thinned out," we may expect an increase in cavalry action during the coming months. The forest-covered northern and central sectors of the front, the Ukrainian sector, cut up by numerous and deep ravines, and, finally, the mountains of certain parts of the extreme southern sector, will afford Soviet cavalry good opportunity to carry out deep raids in the enemy rear.

Of course, should a large-scale German retreat begin, cavalry opportunities will be still greater. Furthermore, with winter communications making fuel supply more and more difficult, another advantage of the cavalry over mechanized forces will come more and more to the fore: a hungry horse will continue to walk and run for a long time on its own reserve of internal energy, but not a piston stroke will come from a tank after the last drop of fuel has been consumed.

COLONEL T.



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THE QUIET MAN

words *by Mark Hess* *(To Earl*

Slow - Strong
Up from the Kan-sas plains, came he, Where
(not strict rhythm - follow singer)
Ped. Ped. simile
tall John Brown fought slav-er-y And
he fights too for a land that's free A
qui-et man a qui-et man His
voice is low but his words are strong And a
mil-lion workers march a-long with the
qui-et man from
Kan-sas He
dreamed a dream of a fruit-ful land the
gov-ern-ment ruled by the peo-ple's hand A
read his books with this sing-le thought And the
qui-et man from
Kansas.

Up from the Kansas plains came he,
Where tall John Brown fought slavery,
And he fights too, for a land that's free—
A quiet man, a quiet man.
His voice is low, but his words are strong
And a million workers march along
With the quiet man from Kansas.

He dreamed a dream of a fruit
The kind that Thomas Jefferson
With government ruled by the p
The quiet man, the quiet man.
He read his books with this sin
And the works of Marx and Leni
The quiet man from Kansas.

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FROM KANSAS

wder)

music by Frank Pearson

that Thom-as Jeffer-son planned with
vi-et man A qui-et man He
orks of Marx and Len-in taught the
Spoken
And these were the thoughts of the quiet man
Chorus: March Tempo
on-ly the peo-ple are im- mort-al
Ours is the fin-al vic-to-
ry We
march in-to the storms a-head con-fi-dent For to
us be-longs the
fu-ture
On-ly the Peo-ple are im- mor-tal
To
us be-longs the
fu-ture

land
nned,
ple's hand

thought
ught

And these were the thoughts of the quiet man—

"Only the people are immortal
Ours is the final victory
We march into the storms ahead, confident
For to us belongs the future.
Only the people are immortal
To us belongs the future."

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TURNING THE TIDE

Balance sheet of the war. The speeches of Stalin, Roosevelt, Churchill—and Hitler—indicate a new stage in the conflict. Need for greater effort. An editorial article.

WHEN one adds up the speeches of Mr. Roosevelt, Mr. Churchill, Joseph Stalin—and Hitler's speech, too—plus a number of developments in Congress, in the Far East, in the military news, it is clear that we have passed through one stage and are entering another. Big decisions are in the offing, affecting every aspect of the war, and all peoples whose fate hangs on the progress of the war.

From Germany, for example, there was Hitler's speech which, as the newspapers have observed, struck many defensive notes. Taken together with Goebbels' article in the magazine *Das Reich* in which the German people are exhorted not "to ask when victory will come," but to exert themselves more strenuously so that "it does come," we have real indications of the terrific recession of morale that is gripping the German masses.

In Tokyo the Diet assembles on November 17 to hear a report from the new Tojo Ministry on where Japan stands. An emissary, Saburo Kurusu, has arrived in Washington to conclude the negotiations with the United States, one way or the other. Japanese troops are being marshalled at the borders of Siam and Malaya. A definite showdown is impending, with strong possibilities that we shall be at war with Japan very soon.

In the Soviet Union the Red Armies have smashed the momentum of Hitler's October offensive, which was going to be the "last great decisive battle of this year." Leningrad and Moscow are still in danger. The Caucasus is in the greatest danger of all, and yet, as Stalin's speech epitomized, the Soviet people have come through a difficult period and face the future with growing strength and confidence.

In Britain, where Churchill is expected to close the debate on foreign policy in the House of Commons, a clarification of that country's war strategy is certainly impending. Stalin's appeal for a second front on the Continent crystallizes the demand that has been welling up among the British masses themselves in the past two months. The decision on what Britain intends to do cannot long be postponed.

And finally we approach a turn of events in our own country. The revision of the Neutrality Act, permitting our ships to arm and deliver their goods, unquestionably is a big step forward. Our navy is now in a position to strengthen its defenses in the Pacific, since the convoy problem will be eased when our merchant ships are armed. Iceland has become a full-fledged naval base; it is now not only an outpost of our defenses, but a halfway point in the bridge of ships we are building to British and Soviet ports. Now that we have guaranteed to get our goods across, the transcendent issue becomes one of producing our goods in much greater volume. This leads directly to the problems of the labor movement. For, together with giving real leadership in foreign policy, labor's role in getting war production is the major issue confronting the CIO at its convention in Detroit.

ON THE face of it, Joseph Stalin addressed only his own people on their twenty-fourth birthday. He spoke of Soviet losses with his customary frankness and realism. He spoke with pride in the strength of the Soviet system, which has not weakened, as so many circles hoped it would, but has strengthened and proved itself in the course of the struggle. But actually, Stalin's speech was a speech to the world. It was a speech that lifted people from their day-to-day speculations, gave them a view of the problem as a whole, a perspective for the present and future. While reassuring, his words never lost their deep earnestness and urgency.

There was one passage, for instance, in the painstaking analysis of the difference between National Socialism and the Soviet system, in which Stalin not only tried to clear up the confusion that still exists in the western world, but really talked to the German people. Granting that the Hitlerites had some justification for calling themselves "nationalists" when they were unifying Germany in the face of the restrictions of Versailles, from the moment they began to enslave other peoples, Stalin said, they ceased to be nationalists and embarked on a career of world plunder and conquest. Thus, he struck at the core of the problem of winning the German people from Hitler. Assuring the Germans their existence as a nation was to be taken for granted—that there could not be another Versailles—despite what Goebbels says to the contrary, Stalin made plain that the Nazi armies face a ruthless war of extermination.

So also, when he referred to the Nazi policy of "intimidating" various circles in Britain and the United States with "the specter of revolution," Stalin was speaking to more than a Soviet audience. In his reference to the fate of the French capitalists, the Soviet premier was helping to debunk before British and American opinion, Hitler's claim to be the "savior of the world from Bolshevism." From this same point, it follows that the working classes of the West, who enjoy "elementary democratic liberies," must also not indulge in playing up "the contradictions between classes," or visualizing the war as a struggle for socialism.

And for the oppressed peoples of Europe, as well as ourselves, Stalin gave a clear definition of Soviet war aims: "We have not and cannot have such war aims as imposing our will and regime on the Slavs and the other peoples of enslaved Europe who are awaiting our aid. Our aid," he repeated, "consists of assisting these peoples in their liberation struggle against Hitler tyranny and then setting them free to rule their own land as they desire." Such sentences are deliberate and clear. They will certainly help strengthen the unity of the anti-Hitler coalition through the war and into the peace.

BUT the central questions which Stalin posed revolve around the relations of Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union in the prosecution of the war, the central question which confronts us all. In Stalin's estimate, the three anti-Hitler powers "have formed a single camp," the coalition among them "is a real thing which is growing and will continue to grow." This is a basic idea from which everything else flows. Yet as Stalin also observed, the Red Army's "temporary setbacks" are due in large part to the fact that "there are no armies of England and the United States on the continent of Europe at present" . . . "that the Soviet Union is still waging the liberation war alone."

And if there be doubt about the fact that these are the real questions which confront us—how to strengthen the unity against Hitler? How to open a second front? How to get our materials produced and across? How to bring our armed forces to bear against Hitler?—it is only necessary to read Hitler's speech carefully.

Significantly, he was most brazen, most boastful, most nervous and frantic precisely on those matters which involve the strengthening of the anti-Hitler forces, the issues which Stalin posed as most urgent. The head of the Reich spoke of "hitting hard" at anyone who "thinks he can resist a garrison or perhaps shake it with a cowardly murder" —an obvious reference to the upheaval against the Nazis in Serbia and France and Czechoslovakia. He asserted that "persons who could make a revolution here are gone . . ." and "persons who may have wanted to make a revolution are few and unimportant. . . ." —the very public discussion of such matters, no matter how arrogant Hitler sounds, is only a reflection of the fact that the Nazis are in trouble among the conquered peoples and at home.

But the most direct challenge to the anti-Hitler coalition was contained in the threat to the British not to undertake an offensive, "whether it is in Norway, on our own German coast, in Holland, Belgium, or France." Hitler ridiculed what he called the "silly attempts of certain Americans to create dreams of fear in Germany through threats

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and plans for gigantic armaments. . . ." When he ordered his submarines to sink American ships in "self-defense," he was trying to trick American opinion into a discussion of who did the shooting first—but nevertheless he reveals that the Nazis *are* worried about us.

They *are* worried about the American arms program and they *are* worried that our ships will get the goods across the Atlantic. In effect, therefore, Hitler has challenged the British and American people. He dared them to open a second front, to build their gigantic armaments, to get the goods across. Thus, in the reverse of Stalin's speech, he has highlighted the main questions that confront us.

ON THE issue of a western front, NEW MASSES does not think so much in terms of what the British ought to do; we think more in terms of what we Americans ought to do to help the British. The British people themselves are working hard to bring their own government to face the issue of a second front. And there is no doubt that we have not seen the end, but only the beginning of a more determined struggle to defeat the appeasement minority in Britain.

The reasons for the failure of the British to open another front are rather clear: undoubtedly, the influence of the hidden appeasers is stronger than would appear from the character of the British war Cabinet. Undoubtedly, there has been a calculation among some elements even in the Cabinet on just when to enter the struggle with military forces; some circles are trying to do so at a point before the Soviet Union is too hard pressed and yet a point when the war will have weakened the Nazis and the Soviet forces greatly. Another reason is, of course, the British concern with the positions of their empire in the Middle East; the tendency has been to prepare for defending the empire instead of preventing a further Nazi advance toward the Caspian by drawing off the Reichswehr in the West.

But so far as we are concerned, the major reason for British reluctance lies in relations with the United States, lies in the fact that the British need a commitment from the United States before they are ready to risk their own materiel and their own manpower. It is we therefore who must step forward and help the British to open up a second front.

And this is not because we ought to have merely the Soviet interest at heart, but because, as our editorials have so often argued, *our own interest as a nation coincides with theirs*. We have a common interest in defeating the menace to us and the menace to them.

Of real significance in the revision of the Neutrality Act is the way the act was revised. The vote in the Senate (57—30) and the probable vote in the House do not give a true picture of how the people feel. For the truth is that the people are responsive to initiative, when the lead is given. A feeling of disgust with all the palaver and filibuster in the Senate and the House was one of the most characteristic popular reactions in the critical weeks the bill was under discussion. It proved that the people are getting into motion; the lag between the masses and the administration is narrowing; the administration might well have been less cautious on the whole issue than it was.

Nor can the labor movement content itself merely with resolutions for aid to Britain and the Soviet Union. Certainly, the President's order to lend a billion dollars to the Soviet Union means that labor need not spend time any longer arguing out issues which had to be argued out last July and August. The time has come for more urgent and more comprehensive measures.

NEW MASSES believes that the time has come for the severance of relations with Germany—and not only with Germany, but all its avowed satellites, Finland, Hungary, France, Rumania, and Spain. There was never any virtue in dawdling with Weygand, never any basis for appeasing a butcher like Franco—we have not gained a thing toward keeping Spanish supplies from feeding the German war machine. The iron, the mercury, the copper from the mines of Spain are going to make bullets and tanks and guns for the Eastern Front, to be used against the guns and bullets we are sending the Russians. It is anomalous and pointless of us to be handling the Finns or the Hungarian legation with kid gloves.

But beyond that, the time has come to consider a declaration of war. Here also, it would be a mistake to await the initiative on this from the administration alone: the job of bringing about the full coordination of our efforts with those of our allies is a job that the organizations of the people must do —in the first place, the trade unions. As it is, a number of committees have already gone on record for a declaration of war. In the colleges, in many trade unions, people have begun to take up the call of the American Legion convention which back in September voted for another AEF, if necessary.

The *New Republic* has several times explored the arguments pro and con. It is true that if war were declared there might be a tendency in some circles to hoard the arms at home instead of getting the goods sent where they are needed most. It is true that many people would like to see Hitler do the declaring first. But the fact is, to paraphrase the President, it does not matter who declares the war first. What matters is whose armies will be standing on the field. Hitler has told us that Germany's battalions will stand on the field after our own have been vanquished.

THE answer to that must be that we get our whole forces into action, that we offer to match a British Expeditionary Force to the continent, and thereby ensure the most rapid, the most decisive defeat for the Nazis both in the East and the West.

The advantages of declaring war now are manifold: it would eliminate all the uncertainties and doubts which continue to undermine the morale of our citizens and the morale of the armed forces. It would give us a clear national objective, the objective of military victory, and this in itself would help to settle the outstanding difficulties in transforming our peace economy into a war economy. It would strengthen national unity, and place the America First and other appeaser, pro-Nazi organizations under the stamp of treason.

A declaration of war would constitute a terrific blow to the Nazis, weaken their hold on the peoples of Europe. It would take the initiative fully and wholly out of Hitler's hands. He could then complain in hysterical terms that he had been attacked—of course. But it would be a hysteria that every one would recognize as the screeching of a gangster that knows he is meeting his doom.

FINALLY, the question which faces the CIO, and the labor movement generally, is the question of getting production, and getting it fast. In this also, unless labor takes the initiative, things will get done with fatal delays or will not get done at all. There have been changes. There has been progress especially as the SPAB gets down to the job. But as everyone who is informed on the defense program knows, we are not producing at all as we might be producing if a score of dollar-a-year men were removed, if the trade unions put their shoulders to the wheel, smoked out the wasters, the misplanners, the laggards—all those who are placing profit, sympathy with the Nazis, or personal antipathy to the British or the Russians ahead of our national interest.

In his article on page 3, Bruce Minton points out what the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers want to do in the case of copper production. The United Electrical, Radio and Machine workers have been doing much in their field. The same has to be done in each industry.

This demands a wise labor policy from the administration. It demands inviting labor into the seat of government planning and policy making, as the Murray Plan provides. It demands the recognition of labor's rights to collective bargaining, and it demands that the administration sponsor price legislation and taxation measures that will not place the burden on those who can least afford to pay. But it also demands more than "union leadership" from the heads of trade unions; it demands *labor statesmanship* also. And that is an issue which must be decided with clarity and unequivocation at the convention of the CIO.

We are passing through a great divide. Hitler's speech reflects the fact that the Nazis are afraid of what the anti-Hitler forces can do. Stalin's speech gives Americans the confidence that the Russians will do their share. Everything depends on what the American people will do in expanding their foreign policy and realizing their productive capacity. That will be a direct encouragement to Britain, to open a second front. It would turn the tide unmistakably in the direction of Hitler's debacle.

THE EDITORS.

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Business Manager

CARL BRISTEL

★

The Threat to Unity

AS WE go to press the headlines tell a disappointing story: the National Defense Mediation Board has ruled against the United Mine Workers' demand for a closed shop in the captive mines. Millions throughout the country will disagree with this opinion. If ever a workingman merited the boons of full unionism, the toiler in the mines owned by the large and prospering steel companies deserves it. All he wants are conditions of parity with his fellows in the rest of the coal industry where the closed shop prevails. But the obstinacy of the steel magnates stands between him and that objective.

This situation is doubly important: it bears national significance not only because some 57,000 miners are involved and the question of uninterrupted production of a basic material is under consideration, but also because the all-important matter of a sound governmental labor policy is on the boards. There is no doubt that a certain percentage of employers see this national emergency created by the Hitler menace as a great opportunity to slash away at labor. The Mediation Board's decision will only encourage other labor-hating employers to take intractable stands.

The ruling on the coal miners follows on the heels of the unsatisfactory conclusions arrived at by the President's Fact Finding Board in the railway dispute. Here, too, much less than justice was done to a million men in a crucial industry. These findings are certainly not conducive to national unity.

It is obvious that maximum production of armaments is central to victory. The vast majority of workingmen have sought to settle all issues by mediation, by arbitration, by joint agreement. The workingman feels, however, and rightly, that powerful labor unions, guaranteeing adequate living standards to meet the requirements of today's stepped-up industrial demands, are the surest way to achieve maximum output.

The responsibility for the safety of America is a heavy one; but labor, the government, the employers must face it. Satisfactory solutions must be found without requiring the necessity to strike. We can be certain of one thing: the Wilhelmstrasse is watching events on this front as carefully as the communiques from the battlelines. For division and delay at the point of production in America are worth armies to the Nazi General Staff.

To Do Their Share

THE workingman's eagerness to do his full share to achieve victory over Hitler was typified by labor's reactions to Civilian Defense Week. Both AFL and CIO leaders stood four-square behind the President's program: representative were the Armistice Day statements of Thomas J. Lyons, head of New York State's AFL, and Joseph Curran, of New York City's CIO setup. Both urged maximum effort to speed defense production: both pleaded therefore that strikes be kept to a minimum. Most significant was Mr. Lyons' statement that differences within labor "be subordinated" for production of "planes, tanks, ships, and guns which will enable Great Britain, Russia, and China to stem the march of fascism." Mr. Curran, observing the success of "Tanks for Russia" week in Britain, proposed a similar week here.

Mr. Curran's union last week provided America with an example of effective labor policy: successful negotiations were concluded between the National Maritime Union and the American Merchant Marine Institute. Substantial emergency pay and extra bonuses for entering war zones were won in a manner that safeguarded any interruption of vital defense shipping. Although the old contract expired on September 30, the new contract provided that all increases be retroactive to that date. There was no strike, no delay, and no loss in seaman's wages. This is a heartening example. It is an object lesson not only for labor, but for management, and for the government.

The Chamberlain Virus

IT IS not only the avowed appeasers who are afflicted with Chamberlainism, that malignant disease which has proved fatal to the independence of so many countries. Even among the anti-Hitler forces there are some who are unable to free themselves from this deadly virus. Take the New York *Times,* for example. It can be said that if the advice given over a period of months by this influential newspaper regarding aid to the Soviet Union were followed, it would produce almost the same results as the policies advocated by the pro-Nazi appeasers. For some weeks after Hitler's attack on the USSR, the *Times* urged that no aid be sent to that country, but that instead all efforts be concentrated on helping Britain. Today, when the *Times* writes editorially, as it did on November 10, that "from motives of unadulterated self-interest, if for no other reason, Great Britain and the United States will be compelled to do everything in their power to prevent a Russian debacle," it tacitly admits that its previous advocacy of no aid to Russia was wrong and detrimental to our country's interests.

But the *Times* has abandoned its former position only in words. That very editorial of November 10 is a case in point. It is obviously designed to counteract the confidence and strength radiating from Stalin's latest speeches which have given encouragement to millions throughout the world. Stalin's optimism is neither bombast nor self-delusion, but is based on a realistic appraisal of both positive and negative factors. The *Times,* on the other hand, sees nothing but darkness and ruin ahead. Pleading for a sober estimate of the situation, the *Times* proceeds to paint everything black, exaggerating difficulties, ignoring favorable elements, surrendering to Hitler in advance Moscow, Leningrad, and the oil of the Caucasus. As for American and British aid, the *Times* sees little possibility of delivering substantial supplies.

If this pessimistic analysis is true, then the recent American mission to Moscow, composed of hard-headed businessmen and high army and navy officers, are selling this country the biggest goldbrick in history, and the $1,000,000,000 loan to the USSR is just good money thrown away. For according to the *Times,* there is "slim hope of preserving an Eastern Front." And this newspaper's defeatism has a two-front range, for it is also against any attempt to open a western front now. Just what it proposes to do to win the war is a mystery.

Coming at this time, when the urgent need is for a rapid increase in American aid to the Soviet Union, the *Times* editorial seeks to influence the policy of our government, as well as the British government, toward lessening the support of the Eastern Front. Out of hatred for the Soviet Union, Chamberlain and his class sacrificed nation after nation and placed their own country in the greatest peril it has ever faced. The same considerations actuate the *Times* and that small minority of the capitalist class for whom it speaks. Their obstructionism must be swept aside; for if it were to prevail, it could only bring disaster to the United States and all the nations that stand against the Nazi menace.

No Truck with Tokyo

IN THINKING about the Far Eastern crisis, let us remember that the United States, together with Britain, China, the Dutch East Indian government, and the Soviet Union has the strategic, the political, and the economic upper hand. There are a couple of thousand airplanes around Batavia; there are Singapore and Manila with the major parts of the American fleet and a good section of the British fleet; there is China with its powerful armies in the field; there are our own troops in the Philippines and Hawaii which have been on a war footing since mid-summer, and there is the entire Soviet Far Eastern army and the Far Eastern fleet of surface and underwater craft. And in terms of economic resources, one does not need statisics to prove the superiority of our resources over Japan's.

In short, there is no reason why we should not take the initiative with Tokyo. It should be made clear to them, as their negotiator Saburo Kurusu arrives in Washington, and as their Diet meets next week, that the United States, together with its associated powers, insists that they make no further move in any direction. And it ought to be made clear that the Ameri-

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can people want them to get out of China. Churchill's speech warning that if war breaks out between the United States and Japan, Britain will declare war on Japan "within the hour," undoubtedly strengthens our position and the position of all nations interested in blocking Japanese aggression.

In the last few days, the remaining detachments of American marines, stationed in China since the days of the Boxers, are moving out. Some circles interpret this as a measure of appeasement. Others point out that in case of war these marines would be trapped beyond the hope of immediate help, since Japan would certainly overrun the International Settlement at Shanghai; thus the withdrawal of troops appears to be a preparation for the showdown. Both explanations are probably true: it is possible that this move is intended as a *double-entendre,* as a way of sounding Japan out on terms of appeasement at the same time that Japan is warned we are preparing for war.

In any case, it is true that in our State Department there are still forces that would like to appease Japan. Their power ought not be underestimated, even though American policy has changed in the past months.

This is the time, therefore, for some expression from the people. At this moment of real crisis, it would not hurt to let the State Department know that the American people are absolutely opposed to appeasing Japan further, and they *are* in favor of taking the initiative. They favor a declaration from the President that if Japan takes any steps, and that should include steps against Siam, the Burma Road, British Malaya, or Soviet Siberia, we shall consider it an act of war.

The Election Returns

LOCAL elections held last Tuesday showed a trend toward anti-Hitler candidates in many cities despite the fact that in most cases the major issue of foreign policy was obscured. Among the significant developments were:

New York—Mayor LaGuardia, running for a third term with the endorsement of President Roosevelt, defeated Tammany's favorite son, Dist. Att. William O'Dwyer, by a plurality of 133,841. The mayor was supported by a coalition of anti-Hitler Republicans, American Laborites, independent Democrats, and good government Fusionists. His sharply reduced plurality (it was 453,874 in 1937) is largely attributed to his failure to bring forward the issue of the anti-Hitler fight and to his ambiguous labor policy in regard to municipal employees. Though O'Dwyer had the support of New York's appeasers and pro-Nazis, there is no doubt that the majority of those who voted for him also back President Roosevelt's foreign policy. Notable was the smashing defeat of George U. Harvey, pro-fascist borough president of Queens.

Of outstanding significance was the comeback of the American Labor Party, which gave LaGuardia 434,297 votes and thus held the balance of power. Another manifestation of support for an all-out effort against Hitlerism was the excellent showing of the Communist Party. To promote unity the party withdrew its citywide candidates and merely retained four nominees for City Council. As we go to press, the proportional representation votes for the Council are still being counted; in Brooklyn the Communist candidate, Peter V. Cacchione, who lost in 1937 by only 250 votes, has a good chance of election.

San Francisco—Mayor Rossi's reactionary machine suffered its first serious reverse when progressive Fusion candidates, running on a platform of municipal improvements and support of the President's foreign policy, defeated four incumbent city supervisors. Archie Brown, Communist candidate, polled 26,500 votes out of 210,000 cast, a proportionate increase over any previous Communist vote.

Chicago—In this stronghold of the America First Committee, Republican candidates with appeasement leanings were overwhelmingly defeated by a Democratic-coalition slate in the county judicial elections.

Detroit—Mayor Edward Jeffries was reelected with ease and George Edwards, member of the United Auto Workers, CIO, was named to the City Council. The two candidates for the Council who ran on a clearcut anti-fascist platform, State Sens. Stanley Nowak and Charles Diggs, polled high votes, but failed of election because of insufficient unity in the ranks of organized labor.

Pittsburgh—Mayor Cornelius D. Scully, supporter of President Roosevelt's policies, was reelected. In McKeesport the reactionary twenty-eight year reign of Mayor George H. Lysle was ended with the election of Frank Buchanan, school teacher and Democrat.

Buffalo—The votes of the American Labor Party supplied the margin of victory for Joseph J. Kelly, Democratic candidate, who won over the nominee of the reactionary Jaeckle Republican machine. In Lackawanna Michael L. Hughes, member of the Steel Workers Organizing Committee and a worker in the Bethlehem mill, was chosen mayor.

Boston—Otis Hood, state chairman of the Communist Party and candidate for the school committee, polled 12,328 votes, more than two and a half times his vote for the same office two years ago.

Plenty of Aluminum

ONE bottleneck in defense production that may be smashed forever is that of aluminum supply. High-grade bauxite, it has been discovered, is by no means the only clay from which aluminum can be made at reasonable cost. Researchers in the TVA laboratories have perfected a process for extracting the ore from common white clay, of which this country has a practically unlimited quantity. And Prof. Arthur Hixson of Columbia University recently reported to a meeting of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers that he had succeeded in obtaining aluminum from low-grade ores by roasting them and then applying boiling hydrochloric acid. Whether the Hixson process is the same as the TVA's is not quite clear from the reports, but the important fact is that aluminum not only can be produced from enormous supplies of ore but more cheaply and with less expenditure of electric power. It will be remembered that there were two bottlenecks in the production of aluminum. One was the diminishing supply of bauxite—enough to last only a year or two—and the other was the Aluminum Co. of America's refusal to expand its plant capacity or to tolerate competition from any other company. Now we no longer have to depend on either domestic or imported bauxite. It remains only for the government to assure a plentiful supply of aluminum by building plants and operating them itself or contracting for their operation on terms that will bring maximum results at minimum cost.

Where the Blame Lies

A PHRASE like "crime wave" or "race riot" has an understandable appeal for headline writers: it is short, it has familiar connotations, and it is sensational. But there's more than that in the misuse of those phrases regarding current conditions in Harlem. One might also say that some newspaper publishers, together with certain officials of the police department, are deliberately trying to create a crime wave and race riots where none exists. Building on the fact that two murders have been committed in Harlem recently and there has been a succession of petty thefts and assaults, New York newspaper stories and editorials have appeared which would persuade readers that it is unsafe to walk one block in Harlem after 6 PM. Unsafe, that is, for *white* persons—for in these stories the entire blame is arbitrarily placed on the Negroes of Harlem and all the arrests reported are of Negroes, especially boys between ten and sixteen.

Granted that an ugly situation exists in Harlem, that crimes have been committed and the rate of juvenile delinquency is high. Granted, too, that more police protection was necessary—for the Negroes as much as the whites. But the solution to such a situation is not simply to call the cops. Harlem is one of the most notorious slum areas in all America. Its housing conditions, the overcrowding and vermin, are indescribable. Recreational facilities are conspicuously lacking and the young people, unable to find jobs or any healthy diversion, escape from unlivable homes to the desperate game of petty crime. Jim Crowism and police brutality foment disorder. It is to the interest of reactionaries to divide Harlem against itself, setting white against black by promoting circumstances which make for antagonisms and then exaggerating the results. The purpose, of course, is to counter the growing unity between the Negro and white population as evidenced in the trade unions and civic groups, a unity directed toward securing jobs, decent housing, and other necessary social measures. An end to anti-Negro discrimination on the part of employers would do more to "clean up" Harlem than all the policing in the world.

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Readers Forum

Mr. Baruch Dissents

TO NEW MASSES: In your editorial of September 30, you refer to your sharp disagreement with me on the "inclusion of wages among the prices over which he proposes to place a ceiling."

I did not imply in any way that every American worker is receiving an adequate wage. I know that in some industries there are many people employed at too low wages.

Control of wages would not mean that their earnings would be lessened. There would be an adjustment committee that would consider their cases. Indeed, I think labor would be much better off than under the plan you favor.

BERNARD M. BARUCH.

New York City.

[We have reread Mr. Baruch's recent testimony before the House Banking and Currency Committee and find most of it well reasoned and enlightening. However, we are more than ever convinced that wages should be exempt from price control legislation. In his statement to the committee Mr. Baruch warned that failure to control prices will subject our people to severe hardships while a few wax rich through "exaggerated profits." The majority of our people consist of wage earners and their families. Yet the remedy he proposes is to crack down on both the offender and his victim!

Obviously Mr. Baruch's proposals are based on the assumption that rising wages are a factor in creating the inflation danger. The recent testimony of Isador Lubin, Commissioner of Labor Statistics, before the House Banking and Currency Committee, completely punctured this theory. Mr. Lubin pointed out that net labor costs have risen only 1.2 percent since 1936, whereas net prices of wholesale goods have increased twenty percent, raw materials, thirty percent, and durable goods, 11.2 percent. The fact is that many of the demands for wage increases are due to the sharp increase in living costs and the exorbitant profits being made by the large corporations. If living costs and profits are kept down, such demands would tend to decrease, though there would still be large numbers of workers whose wages should be raised above their present appallingly low levels.

Looking at the problem from another angle, wages are to a large extent already controlled and fixed, not by the workers, but by the same persons that fix the prices of the goods the workers buy. The man who controls a large part of the supplies of steel or shoes or butter can name his own price or name it in agreement with others in the same business. The consuming public, which cannot get along without steel and shoes and butter, must pay the price. Increased supplies and an increased number of sellers tends to limit the extent of the price-jacking, yet they do not as a rule completely eliminate the advantage which the seller of a necessity has over the buyer. And monopolistic control increases this advantage. Thus, though the public kicks at rising food costs, it has been unable to prevent the retail price of food from jumping eighteen percent in two years.

Consider the position of the wage earner, on the other hand. More likely than not he is unorganized. In that case he must take whatever wage he can get unless there happens to be a shortage of labor in his field. And while high monopoly prices are uniform over the entire country or over large areas, the wages of unorganized workers fluctuate sharply not only from city to city, but even from factory to factory or office to office in the same city. It is the employer who fixes both prices and wages to suit himself.

What about the minority of the working class which is organized into unions? The wages of these workers also are fixed, with this difference: unlike the unorganized workers, the members of trade unions who succeed through difficult struggle in winning agreements do have a voice in determining their wage rates. But these rates are generally fixed for the duration of the contract. Where the question of wage increases can be raised before the contract expires, this requires prolonged negotiations with no assurance of success. And so, while Henry Ford can boost the price of his cars ten percent next week if he wishes, his workers, who have a CIO contract with him, are unable to do likewise in regard to their wages. This basic disadvantage under which workers operate in selling their labor power, as compared to the sellers of other commodities, would be greatly aggravated by any attempt to fix wages by law.

It seems to us that from every standpoint a ceiling on wages is wrong and unnecessary. By impairing both the physical well being and morale of the nation's workers, it would be positively detrimental to national defense. Apart from the question of wages, however, there are no important differences between Mr. Baruch's position on price control legislation and our own.—The Editors.]

Worth Your Support

TO NEW MASSES: The equal distribution of justice is an inalienable American right, perhaps more treasured now that our nation is so gravely menaced by the march of Hitlerism. The Schappes Defense Committee, in the interest of obtaining justice, is now raising a fund to finance the appeal Morris U. Schappes is taking to the higher courts. Without necessarily subscribing to his political views, the undersigned, who are among the many sponsors of the committee, feel that he is entitled to judicial review of the trial he was given from June 18 to June 28, 1941.

Several important facts must be kept in mind by all those to whom we appeal for support:

Morris U. Schappes is a man whose character and integrity have received many tributes. For instance, Morris Raphael Cohen, Professor Emeritus of Philosophy at the City College, in appearing as a character witness for Mr. Schappes at his trial, stated on the stand that Mr. Schappes is "generally regarded as a very honorable, idealistic man; very scholarly in his dealing with his students."

Justice Felix C. Benvenga of the New York State Supreme Court issued a "certificate of reasonable doubt" as to whether the conviction was legal. Defense counsel claims hundreds of legal errors had been committed by the trial court.

The New York Chapter of the National Lawyers Guild, in the brief it filed *amicus curiæ* in the New York State Supreme Court, said: "The prejudice against the defendant extended to the court itself, whose rulings were unmistakably hostile."

The same witnesses that appeared against Mr. Schappes in his criminal trial also testified against Mr. John Kenneth Ackley, recently dismissed City College Registrar, in his administrative trial before the Board of Higher Education. In studying the complete record of the Ackley trial, however, Profs. Harlow Shapley and D. H. Menzel of Harvard and Prof. Ernest Minor Patterson of the Wharton School of Finance of the University of Pennsylvania, concluded that these witnesses had not been able to sustain the charges against Mr. Ackley. The testimony and the charges in the Ackley and Schappes cases are virtually identical.

Obviously an appeal is necessary, both for Mr. Schappes, and for the reputation of our courts. But such an appeal is expensive.

There is very little time in which to file the appeal. To print the record alone will cost over $2,000. At least that sum must be raised soon. Mr. Schappes is known for his trade union and anti-fascist activities. He deserves the aid we are soliciting. Please make checks payable to the Schappes Defense Committee, 114 East 16 St., New York, N. Y. (GRamercy 3-6070).

(Signed) John Bridge, Classics Department, CCNY; Jacob Czik, president, Bakery and Confectionery Workers, Local 1, AFL; Leonard Ehrlich, author; Arthur Huff Fauset, principal, Frederick Douglass - Joseph Singery Junior High School, Philadelphia; Dashiell Hammett, author; Charles Hendley, president, Teachers Union of New York; Robert K. Speer, president, New York College Teachers Union; Professor of Education, NYU; William Steig, artist and cartoonist; Josephine Timms, national secretary-treasurer, American Communications Association, CIO; Art Young, artist.

Many Thanks

TO NEW MASSES: I don't know whether the momentous times we are going through have affected you or me most, but I have never found the magazine as fascinating and absorbing reading as it has been of late. To take some of the more recent issues which I have received, there are the incredible articles by Spivak—which incidentally must boost circulation a lot; the article on Soviet artillery, which I find much more enlightening, and incidentally a lot more cheering, than most of the day-by-day reports; the stirring letter from Shostakovich; Claude Cockburn's cables—which I was inclined to regard as somewhat colored by his wishes, but which the most recent events have proved to be rather an understatement, so that I look forward all the more eagerly to his subsequent reports; and, most magnificent of all, Dugan's "Communique from Brooklyn," a priceless bit of Americana.

I was also particularly interested, in a recent issue, in the article on the lawyers of the Soviet Union. For me, factual articles like that and the one on Soviet artillery have a particular appeal, and they seem to me of general value because they help to make the Soviet Union a day-by-day reality rather than a philosophical abstraction.

In view of all you are doing for me, therefore, I feel that I cannot do less than respond to your campaign for funds, and I therefore take pleasure in enclosing my check for $99.45. I would have made it $100, but I am taking out the 55c I wasted, on the strength of your recommendation, on *Tom, Dick, and Harry*. Maybe that is satire, but if it is it is pretty thick—or I am. And if it isn't satire it is, I think, with few exceptions, pretty awful. For me it began and ended with Tom.

A READER.

Washington, D. C.

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"BREAD AND A STONE"

Alvah Bessie's poignant novel reveals extraordinary insight into a man who never had a chance. Portrait of a character awakened from "psychological death." Reviewed by Samuel Sillen.

BREAD AND A STONE, *by Alvah Bessie. Modern Age. $2.50.*

ON THE surface there would appear to be not the slightest resemblance between Alvah Bessie's new novel and his book on the Spanish war, *Men in Battle.* And yet there is, I think, an interesting link between these two works by my gifted colleague of the theater department. One important theme of *Men in Battle* was the problem of the individual who finds himself in a dead pocket psychologically and who seeks to break through his isolation in order to establish some creative relationship to life. The narrator was an intellectual who had become cut off from people. The sense of separation had become insupportable. It was only through the merging of his individual desire with the broader human effort of the war that he found some kind of integration and meaning. He was restored to life.

Despite profound differences of character and circumstance, this is also the basic theme of *Bread and a Stone.* "I allus liked folks," says Ed Sloan, "but it was hard f'r me t' get next to 'em an' it was hard f'r them t' get next t' me. Somehow I was allus feelin' diff'rent from 'em. . . ." But in the case of Ed Sloan it was not a false kind of intellectualism that had caused the feeling of apartness and death. His is rather the tragedy of a man who has never had a chance to develop or express the buried resources of his personality. He could have become many things and many men, reflects his wife Norah after Ed has been sentenced for the murder which he unintentionally committed. "He could have been a pilot, a father of children, a mechanic, a carpenter, a farmer who tills the soil and watches his creative mind, his love, blossom in the form of blooming crops." And then, significantly, Norah thinks of Spain and China, of the people everywhere fighting for their lives.

Ed Sloan, like Bigger Thomas, never had a chance. He had been brought up in dreadful poverty; he had been the victim of a cruel stepfather. He had welcomed reform schools and prison bars as a refuge from a battering environment. A star pupil of the penal system, he could neither read nor write beyond the level of the third grade. Between Ed and Norah Gilbert there would seem to be no possible bond. Norah was a teacher in the smalltown New England academy where her husband had also taught until his death. Her best friend was a New York writer, Bill Hogan. From the point of view of a liberal intellectual like Hogan or of a New England lady like Ella Horton, the marriage of Ed and Norah was a blind, fantastic venture doomed to failure.

But Alvah Bessie has done a remarkable job in explaining this relationship, so "impossible" from a more conventional point of view. Norah's first marriage had been far less happy than had appeared on the surface. Ben Gilbert had been a lonely and disillusioned man whose faith in life had been undermined by his experience in the first world war. Norah's deep urges for companionship and understanding had washed away the snobbism unwittingly reflected in the attitude of her friends. In her relation with Ed Sloan we witness a sympathy and human responsiveness which are so often smothered in affairs having a greater pretense to propriety.

And it is this simple and warm human quality which shines through a narrative occupied only on the surface with crime, confession, and trial scenes. It is this quality which enables Norah, as it enables the reader, to understand that not Ed Sloan but the environment that has cheated him of life is the criminal. You may call Ed a liar; but only if that easily abused term has transformed its meaning to describe a man who must bolster his self-esteem by imaginatively re-creating his deprived life. If he pretends to have been a war pilot, a mechanic, and whatnot, it is not to fool others but to sustain himself. Even in the moments before his execution he must support himself with a myth. Or you may call Ed Sloan a crook, as the court ruled and as indeed by all mechanical standards he was; but here again a conventional conception has been transformed and we understand that Ed's pathetic attempt at a holdup was a necessary, though unfortunate, assertion of his dignity as a human being. Or you may call him other names: sulky, ignorant, crude; but the point is that you won't, because the meaning of his life has flooded your consciousness and made you uncomfortably aware, as it has made Bill Hogan aware, that none of the easy labels will work.

Alvah Bessie

Bessie has used an interesting technical device in the telling of this story. Suspense lies not so much in the external details of Sloan's fate, not so much in the unraveling of plot complications, as in the expanding psychological insight into motive and background. The external action, therefore, leaps ahead in various sections of the book and we always know in advance what the character has done physically or what the judgment of the detectives and the courts will be. And at each point that we have been made aware of the external situation, we are pulled back into the consciousness of the character for those rich qualifications and amplifications in which the essence of the story resides. This is not to imply that there are mechanical breaks in the narrative, or that the story lacks pace. There is rather the sense of ebb and flow between incident and emotion. At the same time there is a danger inherent in this method of thrusting the action forward and then moving backwards in time to enrich and solidify it. There is the danger of repetition and anti-climax, and in one or two episodes I felt that Bessie, like Richard Wright in the much discussed trial scene of *Native Son,* tended to recapitulate rather than advance the narrative to a new level.

The poignant mood of the novel is established in a number of excellent scenes which leave a deep impression. One remembers, for example, the skillful counterpoint of the scene in which Norah reads a passage from *Samson Agonistes* describing "a life half dead, a living death, and buried." Or, in another key, the delightful scenes in which Norah's child, Katey, plays with her new father. In such passages the writing assumes a lyrical intensity. At the same time, when the situation calls for sharpness and sarcasm, as in the treatment of Alice Hogan or of the grilling detectives, the author can rip into the insensitive personality with conclusive effect.

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EARL BROWDER.

THE COMMUNIST

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The Silent Don: An Epic of Our Time, ***Review by N. A. Daniels***

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There is one respect, I feel, in which Bessie falls short of his intention. At one point in the story Norah is evaluating the lawyer, Mr. Farmer, who defends Sloan. Norah has matured; her social perceptions have become sharpened. And she understands that Mr. Farmer is a Clarence Darrow type, and that while he consistently defends the underdog he defends him "not out of any radical desire to change the world, but out of an emotional understanding of people who had never had a chance." Norah feels that this is the wrong approach. "Today," she reflects, "the honest human being *had* to be a radical. You cannot say, Have mercy! You *must* say, Let there be justice! and anything that obstructed or subverted justice, *anything*—whether it were laziness, misunderstanding, ignorance or prejudice, or pure malevolence and greed—would have to be outlawed." That militant assertion is the basic interpretation which Bessie himself gives to Ed Sloan's story, and it is a splendid conception. It is altogether true that there is no sentimentalizing or mercy-pleading in the book. But I for one cannot help feeling that the driving power of "Let there be justice!" is incompletely embodied in the texture of the story as a whole. I find myself understanding Ed and Norah, but I do not find myself moved or shaken into an appreciation of the broader implication of their tragedy which Bessie suggests. The cumulative impact of the clues and overtones that link the characters to larger classes of people is incompletely realized. Perhaps the difficulty is inherent in treating an individual like Sloan, who is removed from the basic and dynamic social groupings of our society.

Bessie has dealt with a difficult theme and he has given us a highly imaginative and sympathetic portrait of two human beings who will not easily be forgotten. The direct and dramatic narrative reveals an extraordinary insight into a character who awakened from his psychological death only in the last year of his life. And in tracing Ed Sloan's struggle, with the help of Norah, to move from the periphery of reality to its center, Bessie has again, as in *Men in Battle,* celebrated the forces of human goodness and justice at the same time that he has indicted the forces which seek to reduce man to the level of the beast, those forces which generously offer a stone and death when man asks for bread and life.

SAMUEL SILLEN.

Washington in the Civil War

REVEILLE IN WASHINGTON, *by Margaret Leech. Harper & Bros. $3.50.*

MARGARET LEECH (Mrs. Ralph Pulitzer) has provided us with a detailed account of Washington in the Civil War. A wealth of documentation, the revival of forgotten details, a glamorous coating over men and events, are but a few aspects of this work. The resulting story is piquant, conveying immediacy and suspense. The Negro in Washington, the military hospitals, women's work, the skullduggery that darkens all great causes, are given as in a chronicle. It is a mine of reference; it is entertaining.

Dissent must center not on details but on the fundamental attitude of Miss Leech to the issues involved and to the men and institutions of the great trial. One can pass over strange omissions such as the role of the Diplomatic Corps, central to the war. The diplomats are given in their social aspects; of their crucial political importance little is revealed. The Secret Service, without which our military triumphs would not have taken place, and which ensured that they counted once they were attained, is not appraised as it should be. The role of labor—it is no use saying that Washington was remote from factory and workshop—is scarcely hinted. The foreign born are rendered picturesque rather than shown as a decisive factor in Union victory. The fifth column is detailed in a great social sketch—of its true sources and the type of connections that gave it meaning, there is scarcely a sign. The Owen investigations, basic to capitalist development in the war, are not even noticed, and they occurred in Washington. We might have been spared some Pepysian details for that. The Copperhead surge into Congress is merely hinted at. The relations with finance, which consumed the time and attention of the government more than army affairs, are not cited. Miss Leech's treatment of McClellan, Stanton, Pope, Burnside, Hooker, Grant, Sherman is devoid of freshness, novelty, or importance. They are the stereotypes every scholar must suspect. It is surprising to see the adequacy, sympathy, and depth of her treatment of the unfortunate Mary Lincoln, and her taken-for-granted attitude towards the military leaders.

But the secret comes out in the last chapter. The author tells us peace came with harshness. "Peace came at last shabby and disfigured under the new regime." There is tenderness to the defeated slaveholders, while the cartoons of the great Reconstruction men make them unlovable; and of Jacob Thompson, who saw the Treasury pillaged and then scuttled his country, we learn that he was "vindicated by congressional inquiry." Throughout blows are softened for the foes of the human race, for enslavers and aristocrats, enemies of everything America stands for.

It is true one sees Washington grow physically, one sees Union determination harden out of the crucible of trial and experience, but of the profound growth of Union sentiment as traced to its true sources, there is no inkling. In her treatment, democratic apprehension is abstract, democratic passion induced. The triumph of the North appears as a decision of material power over the cerebral superiority of the generals and statesmen of the South. Actually, Confederate diplomats were no match for Adams and Corwin, Confederate finance silly even in view of its smaller resources, compared to Northern; Confederate commissariat work was far less

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honest and competent, internal administration was a folly compared to that of the wise and powerful Union men. In Miss Leech's book this stupendous superiority is nowhere felt, any more than is the overshadowing greatness of Lincoln compared to Jefferson Davis. The author is so immersed in detail, in the picturesque, in love of her immense erudition, and in a pleasant and kindly attitude toward all men, that she has been betrayed by her virtues into delineating Washington without the true sources of its behavior and without any sense of history's dynamics, so that she has given us a canvas that is rich but basically without any importance. Without the class analysis of the Civil War, so amazingly apprehended at the time by Marx (yes, and by Greeley in *The American Conflict*) the comings and goings at Washington may be pictured colorfully without being given truthfully.

In the last chapter Miss Leech sums up: the soldiers at the end of the war "remember discipline and obedience as transitory virtues, foreign to the American spirit of individual enterprise." The wholeness of American experience, the inter-penetration of pioneer enterprise and of free discipline, are not only missed; the lesson is inverted. The static quality of her thinking has made the Civil War an exhibition of isolated, discrete forms of action.

But one must be grateful for a finished literary undertaking, useful to researchers, full of purple patches and the testimony of a vitality all too rare in the Byzantine historical manuals that have recently usurped the name of science.

WILLIAM BLAKE.

Cornish Miners

THE LONG WINTER ENDS, *by Newton G. Thomas. Macmillan. $2.75.*

WHEN the mines close down throughout his native Cornwall, young Jim Holman is forced to leave his homeland and his girl wife, Pol, to join the trek of his fellow miners across the Atlantic in search of work. Thus another chapter opens in the growing saga of America-in-the-making. In Upper Michigan, where Jim begins to mine copper, along with other Cornishmen, and Slavs and Finns, he struggles to make a place for himself and master the three R's in order to read Pol's letters and write to her in his own hand. The book ends with the long winter of Jim's and Pol's endurance over, and Jim awaiting her and their new-born son in the little house which his fellow miners have helped make possible.

This is Jim's story, told with genuine feeling and simple realism—in fact, perhaps too simple. Convincingly as the book portrays the dignity, humor, and hardihood of these Cornish miners, it gives us an incomplete picture. Jim's struggle to find himself in this new world is given almost in a vacuum, without social background. Only the long Michigan winter, his need for Pol, and his woeful burden of illiteracy weigh upon Jim. The bigger forces

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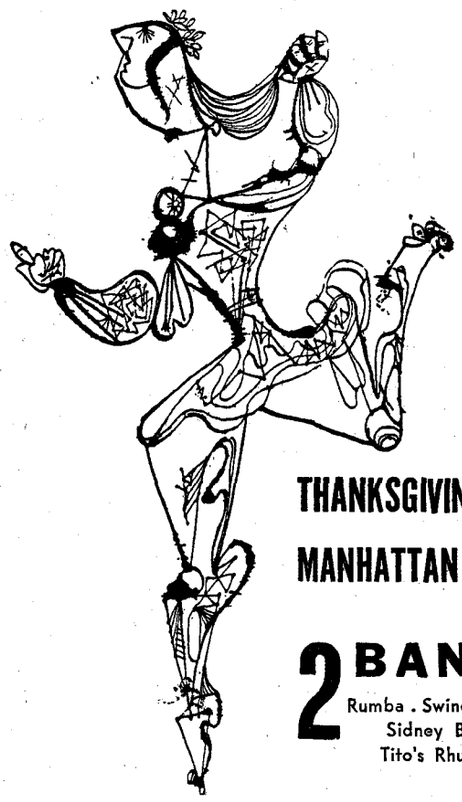

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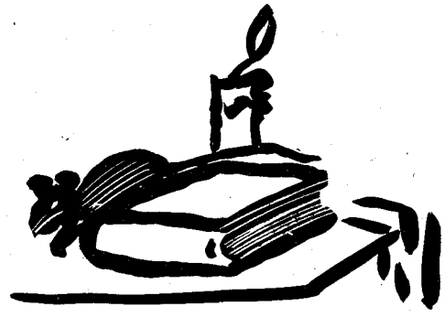
shaping his destiny remain vague. The great copper interests are out of the picture. All we see is the straw boss, a kindly fellow Cornishman whom the miners instinctively mistrust, then come to like. Jim shows not the least consciousness of the bitter need for unionism. Yet, actually, Cornish miners and Upper Michigan generally have a labor tradition of which they may be proud. If the author—a former Cornish miner, now for many years a university professor—had approached his story in less nostalgic mood, he would have produced a novel of more lasting value. Nevertheless, *The Long Winter Ends* gives a memorable though limited picture of stalwart Jim and his fellow Cornishmen who have done their part in making America. MYRA PAGE.

Brief Review

AMERICA'S LAST KING *by Manfred S. Guttmacher. Chas. Scribner's Sons. $3.50.*

This biography of George III is written by an outstanding psychiatrist. It is fitting that a specialist in mental diseases should attempt to delineate the character of the insane grandson of a neurotic man (George II). Though the work does consider the social and political forces which helped precipitate the king's mental crisis, chief emphasis is laid on the psychogenic aspects of his behavior. It is well that Dr. Guttmacher concentrated upon that field in which he is expert, for when he does plunge into the maelstrom of eighteenth and nineteenth century British politics, the result is not especially illuminating, but is rather shallow and oversimplified. Thus, one finds the observation seriously offered that had the conventional grand tour of England's aristocrats included America as well as Europe in the eighteenth century, there might well have been no Revolution. Moreover, one is asked to believe that ". . . fanaticism breeds fanaticism, and without it great popular movements are rarely born," a remark that is supposed to help "explain" the course of world history from the American through the French Revolutions. One is reminded of the profound comment of Thaddeus Stevens that, "in the cause of liberty there are no fanatics."

The publisher's blurb asserts that this book is "one of the most significant and illuminating biographies in recent years." Hardly. The medical data offered by Dr. Guttmacher are important for an understanding of George III, yet these will be but a fraction of the material from which the scholar who will write the mad monarch's definitive history will draw his complete portrait.



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HORROR WITH SUBTLETY

Joy Davidman finds "Ladies in Retirement" a blood-curdling character study. The extraordinary acting of Ida Lupino. . . . Noel Coward and the apotheosis of piffle.

THIS reviewer loves nothing better than having her blood curdled. A really good vampire will make her wiggle her toes with delight; and *Ladies in Retirement* affected her like a champagne cocktail. The film is not only horrifying, but horrifying with subtlety. It does not need blood or secret passages or monsters. It prickles your skin with little things like a sealed-up bake oven, a lighted candle, a scrap of Gilbert and Sullivan's "Tit-Willow" played on an old piano. Nor is it merely a thriller, for its character study is brilliant, and its story of a desperate young woman protecting her lunatic sisters is sensitive and profoundly tragic.

The situation on which *Ladies in Retirement* is founded might easily have degenerated into melodramatic absurdity. But adroit writing and consummate acting have prevented that. An aging light-of-love, supported by old admirers in a house on the edge of the marshes, allows her young companion to bring the companion's two sisters for a visit. The sisters turn out to be hysterical lunatics, and the visit stretches into weeks, until the old woman, tired beyond endurance, decides to rid herself of all three. At this point the sane sister resorts to a very nasty expedient, and remains in possession of the house until Nemesis, in the person of a criminal lout of a nephew, turns up. The progression by which the film reaches its inevitable end is remorselessly logical, and carefully understated scenes intensify the horror.

The extraordinary acting of Ida Lupino, as the companion, and Louis Hayward, as her nephew, gives the film much of its distinction. Deliberately unglamorous, Miss Lupino creates an effect of pain and despair to which the swaggering coarseness of the man makes an admirable contrast. Mr. Hayward presents a young man very conscious of his charm, and using it to ingratiate himself until he becomes actually revolting. It is a beautiful piece of work. The lunatic sisters are cleverly played by Elsa Lanchester and Edith Barrett, especially the latter; Isobel Elsom is convincing as the old woman. A girl named Evelyn Keyes, of whom we should see more, makes the simpering housemaid come alive.

With all this, it is a pity that *Ladies in Retirement* should be marred by the imbecile presentation of its screen credits. Here is a film directed with subtle economy; not a single camera shot is out of place, not an effect is overstressed. And yet it must begin with three minutes of producers', authors', and actors' names displayed on moldering signboards in a Hollywood marsh. Is this to create atmosphere? If so, it is quite unnecessary; the film itself has atmosphere to spare. Plain black and white print is the cleverest and quickest way of getting screen credits stated, and the film industry should be sufficiently grown up to realize it.

IN EVERY HUMAN BEING there is something of the masochist; else why should I, knowing so well what to expect, deliberately expose myself to *The Chocolate Soldier?* The simplest method of reviewing it would be to reach for a thesaurus and amass a stock of nasty adjectives. Thus: tedious, soporific, abominable, Boeotian, lousy.

But let me state that once George Bernard Shaw wrote a comedy called *Arms and the Man.* Not one of his masterpieces, it was watered down to make an operetta called *The Chocolate Soldier,* by Lehar. This, even in its denatured condition, probably seemed to the producers too much for the acting powers of Nelson Eddy and Rise Stevens; so, retaining the title, they substituted another play—Molnar's *The Guardsman,* which depends entirely on brilliant acting for its effectiveness and of which an older film version already exists. This version had the Lunts and Roland Young; it is more than ten years old, its technique is outmoded, and it remains ninety-nine times more worth seeing than the lavish *Chocolate Soldier* with benefit of Mr. Eddy.

This gentleman's blank blue stare and careful corseting may not make him a chocolate soldier, but they achieve a fairly handsome wooden Indian, and the recording is kind to the tender nasality of his baritone. As for Rise Stevens, she doesn't look bad, if you remember how Jeanette MacDonald used to look. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, as usual, has invested a lot of money and no brains in the production. But why should I go on like this? Tedious; soporific . . . lousy. . . .

WITH *Never Give a Sucker an Even Break*

I was luckier. This film, which we will call *Sucker,* affectionately, from now on, is the first thing out of Hollywood which doesn't make sense—and doesn't pretend to. The deliberate imbecility of its story was devised cunningly by W. C. Fields to display his curious talents and his resplendent nose at their best. *Sucker* deals with Mr. Fields' heroic attempt to sell a script to a movie producer, so that he can support his little niece, Gloria Jean. The action shifts rapidly back and forth from the movie studio to the extremely imaginary world of Mr. Fields' script, and if you can tell fact from fancy you're Superman. To illustrate, in the real world Mr. Fields tries to drink an ice-cream soda; it is only in the imaginary one that he resorts to Scotch.

The movie studio scenes, to this reviewer, seemed a little tame; they fell so far short of some of her recollections. But the unreal world, in which Mrs. Hemoglobin lives on top of a mountain with her pet gorilla, is the place we should send all our appeasers. People fall 10,000 feet out of aeroplanes, without parachutes. People are pushed off 1,000-foot cliffs, with noise of breakage from below. Mrs. Hemoglobin, with a face like an elderly kohl-rabi, walks serenely around her ivory tower—an escapist to end all escapists.

The film has its dull moments; there are times when the camera shifts away from Mr. Fields. He pops up again before it's too late, however, and none of the musical numbers is allowed to keep him from you very long. From irrelevancy to irrelevancy he wobbles, in his inimitable manner, which, if you like that sort of thing, is the sort of thing you like. We did. Not the least successful irrelevancy is the film's title, which refers to nothing at all, unless Mr. Fields was thinking lovingly of his audience.

THE REVOLTING SPECTACLE of Ronald Colman being cute will haunt us the rest of our lives. Anna Lee, in *My Life with Caroline,* has yellow curls, round blue eyes, and idiotic giggles; but Mr. Colman, with nothing but his mustache, can give her lessons in coyness. The story of a husband's maneuvers to keep a wife who is obviously not worth keeping, this film goes so far as to let Ronald pop out from behind a pillar, leer demurely at the audience, and whisper, "Don't worry; I'll explain all this to you later!" Some of the audience didn't wait for the explanation, but passed out right away. We, being a reviewer, were perforce of sterner stuff.

Antics which might be amusing from

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Mickey Mouse are out of place in a gentleman of somewhat well-preserved charm. Caroline hasn't much sense, but she shows the little she's got in repeatedly trying to leave her husband, and his efforts to regain her consist of making her boy friend come late for their elopement. The whole thing is what, when we want to be kind, we describe as a piece of unfortunate whimsy.

JOY DAVIDMAN.

Two Plays

Noel Coward's "Blithe Spirit" . . . . An anti-Nazi drama?

IF YOU proceed—as you must—from the conviction that the dramatic works of Noel Coward represent the apotheosis of piffle, something still remains to be said. For although it is true that Mr. Coward is a perennial blower of pale lavender soap-bubbles, it is also true that they are the very *best* bubbles. They are well blown; blown better than anyone else, Clare Boothe not excepted, can blow them. They are bright, round, clever—and just as empty.

Mr. Coward's forte in the theater involves expert craftsmanship applied to nonexistent material. You may choose to regard this as a minor tragedy if you wish, but it is still a fact that he is a craftsman. He has a sense of atmosphere, a sense of the stage, he knows how to handle situations (inconsequential as they may be) and place them neatly next to one another, until they form an ingenious pattern. The situations he handles are as a rule completely trivial. He is an adept at discovering the lowest traits in human beings and throwing them in the faces of his characters and his audiences. He possesses a genius for inconsequential and irrelevant remarks, and insulting statements. In all his works, his male characters are dogs, his female characters the female equivalents. Sometimes this is funny; generally it is a bore, for not only have these characters little relationship to human beings, but their creator's efforts to be insulting, pointless, and amusing are frequently over-labored and dull.

For the purpose of his new "improbable" farce, *Blithe Spirit,* Mr. Coward has assumed a more mellow attitude. But his situations are quite as irrelevant, his gags quite as manufactured. It pleased his fancy to take a novelist, who was seeking material on the occult, and have his efforts to contact the spirit world bear fruit. The spirit of his seven-year-dead first wife is materialized. She is very lovely, but scarcely acceptable to his present, very-much living wife. You get the situation.

Mr. Coward handles this very cleverly. The wraith can see and hear everything that goes on in the novelist's home, but is only visible and audible to the novelist. This makes for some amusing mistakes on the part of the other characters. But the spirit is far from benign. She wishes to bring her former husband over onto "the other side." Instead, she manages to kill the second wife. (Are you laughing?)

You might think this situation could become boring in the space of three acts, but if so, you under-rate Mr. Coward's ability as a stage technician. It does become boring, but only occasionally. Mostly he keeps the bubble bouncing, and with the assistance of a fine cast and excellent direction, the bubble is very pretty. (I did not say it was important.) Miss Peggy Wood as the living wife, Leonora Corbett as the dead one, and Clifton Webb as the bedeviled Cowardly novelist, play with spirits that are blithe. Acting honors, however, and whatever characterization the dramatist has achieved belong to Mildred Natwick as the medium who contacts "the other side." This is as genuine a comedy performance as you are likely to see, occasionally overplayed a bit, but generally subtle, ingenious, delightful.

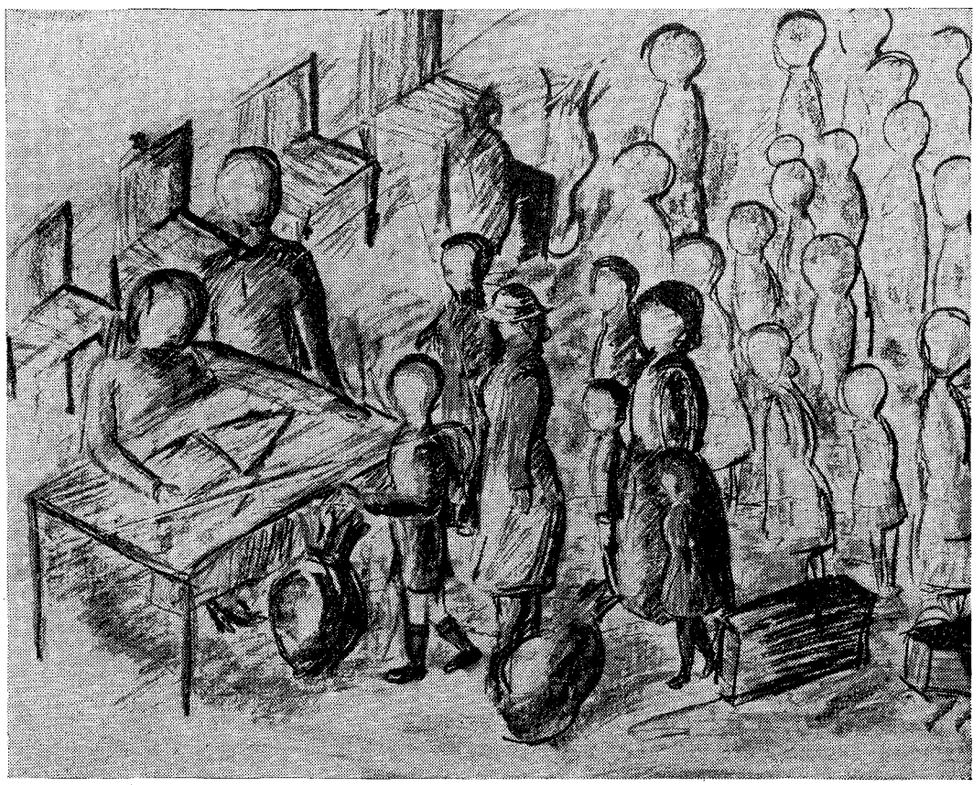
For those who want cliches, Noel Coward represents the very worst aspects of British upper class snobbery (witness his treatment of the maid servant in this play). He is snide, usually vulgar, quite swish, *fin-de-siecle,* and sometimes he can arouse terroristic impulses in otherwise well-balanced individuals who place some value on human dignity.

ALVAH BESSIE.

★

"THE MAN WITH BLOND HAIR," the new play by Norman Krasna, the Hollywood writer, is one of the most curious anti-Nazi plays on record. The central idea, evidently, that impelled the writing of the play, was to drop a couple of Nazis into a Jewish East Side home, and then to see what would come of it. Under normal circumstances, the Nazis would have been properly done in, and there would have been no play. Mr. Krasna, however, had other plans, which are somewhat as follows. Two German aviators captured by the British and headed for a Canadian prison, escape over the border, only to be arrested in New York. While they are being held for the federal authorities, several young men of the neighborhood, including a policeman, get wind of their presence, and decide to take matters into their own hands. They pry the Nazis loose from the jail. One Nazi gets away, and the other is brought up to a tenement roof, to answer for the deeds of his leader. The details of how all this is brought about need not detain us, since judging by the poverty of ideas which follow, they did not detain Mr. Krasna either. During an odd moment in which the Nazi is left alone to commend his soul to Wotan, he is rescued by a charming Jewish girl living in the house. And in the nick of time. Another instant and the Nazi would have plunged off the roof. By all the rules of decency, nothing should have stopped him, for this would have intelligently ended the proceedings and permitted the spectators to go home.

The character portrayals are as weird as the motivations. The Nazi, fanatical in his beliefs, is stalwart, dignified, unbending; in contrast the boys who captured him are low comedy buffoons, inefficient, bungling, conquered by the Nazi's moral strength. This treatment, joined to the fact that the Nazi is placed in a hostile environment, the traditional basis for the creation of the heroic



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GOINGS ON

JAPAN'S NEXT STEP—Showdown in the Far East. Joseph Starobin, foreign editor, New Masses, speaks at Workers School Forum, 50 East 13th St., Sat., Nov. 15, at 2:15 P.M. Admission, 25 cents.

MARXIST ANALYSIS OF THE WEEK'S NEWS by JOEL REMES, member Workers School faculty, Sun., Nov. 16, 8:30 P.M. Workers School, 50 E. 13 Street. Admission 25 cents.

FIFTH AVE. FORUM presents MIKE GOLD, "The Jewish People in Wartime," Sun., Nov. 16, 8 P.M. 77 Fifth Ave. Adm. 15c. Questions—Discussion.

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character, makes the Nazi the most sympathetic person on the stage.

Be that as it may, the Nazi is now comfortably hidden in the apartment of a Jewish family, and the situation that is responsible for the play is now achieved. This accomplishment must have drained all inventiveness out of Mr. Krasna, for nothing happens until just before the final curtain. The cast is immobilized over long stretches of time, during which they have nothing whatsoever to do. The Nazi, when he can, stuffs himself with butter, fish, and borscht. Finally the play flares into a brief moment of life. The second Nazi is discovered hiding behind a water tower. One of the boys is killed trying to get him. The desperado breaks into the room and together with the first Nazi gets hold of a gun, and cows the room full of people. You expect that now the Nazis will back off the stage and bring sweet release to all concerned. But instead the absolute low of the play is reached. The Nazi becomes converted. He cannot shoot his good friends, and he pleads for understanding. It must have been the borscht.

I have heard several people argue that it was possible to bring the Nazi back to reason and light. Let us be grateful that these people are not also playwrights. Here is a young fascist, molded by the Hitler degeneracy, a fanatical follower of the fuehrer, and chosen for a special mission in the Western Hemisphere. To those few people who think that these Nazis can be converted, as well as to Mr. Krasna, we urgently recommend the reading of a cable by Ilya Ehrenbourg, published in NEW MASSES on September 23, and the latest speech by Joseph Stalin on the twenty-fourth anniversary of the USSR.

The settings for the play are done by Howard Bay in his usual imaginative style. Coby Ruskin, Robert Williams, Eleanor Lynn, Curt Conway, and others struggle valiantly against the handicaps of the script. Whatever intensity exists is due to the perseverance of Alfred Ryder during the one flash of action in the entire evening.

JOSEPH FOSTER.

The Latest Music

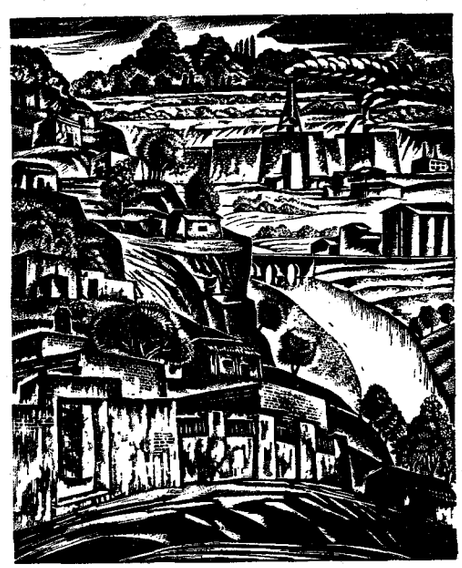
Tschaikowsky and other masters on the new discs.

TSCHAIKOWSKY'S unusual popularity is indicated by the many new recordings of his compositions recently issued by Victor and Columbia. Heading the list is the eagerly awaited Horowitz-Toscanini-NBC Symphony release of the "Piano Concerto No. 1 in B Flat Minor." The reading will come as a surprise—perhaps a shock—to those who have listened only to the Rubinstein-Barbirolli interpretation. From the opening march-like theme in three-quarter time, Horowitz's attack is far more vigorous and compelling than Rubinstein's. The astounding brilliance of the first movement, its variety and intensity of color, and its animation have never been more evident. As for the conducting, Toscanini is faster and stronger than Barbirolli. However, this does not necessarily mean that the newer recording is superior to the old. In both cases the pianist is superb, the conductor is sensitive, and the orchestra magnificent. Only one factor should influence your choice: if you prefer your Tschaikowsky unadulterated, Rubinstein is your man; but if you prefer the addition of strength to the composer's sentimentality, the Horowitz recording (Victor, $4.50) will suit you better.

The two major companies pay tribute to Tschaikowsky's popular "Symphony No. 5 in E Minor"—Victor with a recording by Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra, and Columbia with a release by Beecham and the London Philharmonic. ($5.50 each) Both readings are forthright and musicianly, and make no attempt to dramatize the composer's brooding self-pity. Each presents the depths of Tschaikowsky's sorrow with subtlety, ably balancing the emotional and musical content. This reviewer prefers the new releases to the highpowered Rodzinski treatment or the flamboyant version by Stokowski.

Other recent Tschaikowsky recordings include a clear-cut and dynamic playing of the "Symphony No. 4 in F Minor" by Mitropoulous and the Minneapolis Orchestra (Columbia, $5.50) and the rarely heard "Symphony No. 2 (Little Russian) in C Minor" presented with distinction by the Cincinnati Orchestra conducted by Eugene Goosens. The earlier work has for some reason been neglected although it is unusually melodic, reflecting the folk tunes of "Little Russia" upon which its themes are based. (Victor, $4.50)

IN A DIFFERENT VEIN, Victor has just released Ravel's choreographic poem for orchestra, "La Valse." First played in 1920, it has the mad abandon of many postwar musical celebrations and reveals an inescapable cynicism and bitterness. The composition receives intelligent treatment by the San Francisco Orchestra, Monteux conducting, which is espe-



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cially effective in the almost insanely violent climax. (Victor, $2.50)

Other interesting releases include Dvorak's "Quintet in E Flat Major," played with keen understanding by the Prague String Quartet and Kosderka (Victor, $4.50) and W. F. Bach's "Sonata in C Minor" in which Yella Pessl, harpsichordist, and William Primrose, violinist, do very well by Johann Sebastian's son, Wilhelm. (Victor, $2.50)

MICHAEL AMES.

PROGRESSIVE'S ALMANAC

"PROGRESSIVE'S Almanac" is a calendar of meetings, dances, luncheons, and cultural activities within the progressive movement. This list is published in connection with NEW MASSES' Clearing Bureau, created for the purpose of avoiding conflicting dates for various affairs. Fraternal organizations, trade unions, political bodies, etc., are urged to notify NEW MASSES Clearing Bureau of events which they have scheduled. Service of the Clearing Bureau is free. A fee of one dollar per listing will be charged for all affairs listed in this column.

NOVEMBER

17—Amer. Council on Soviet Relations, meeting, celebrating 8 years diplomatic relations between the USA and USSR, Manhattan Center.

20—(Thanksgiving Night) United American Artists, Camouflage Ball, Manhattan Center.

22—New Theater of Manhattan, Opening Night, "Showdown," Transport Hall.

22—Y. C. L., Annual Dance — Royal Windsor.

23.—I. W. O., Nat'l Folk Festival, Reflecting Democratic Culture of Peoples Fighting Fascism, 2 P.M., Manhattan Center.

29—New Theater League, Testimonial to Earl Robinson, Town Hall.

DECEMBER

1—Jewish Survey, Assembly for Justice to Nat'l Minorities, place to be announced.

3-7—Oklahoma Committee to Fight Syndicolism Cases, Art Auction and Sale, Puma Galleries.

6—NEW MASSES, 30th Annual Artists and Writers Ball, Webster Hall.

13—Workers School, Fall Dance, Irving Plaza.

17—Committee of Jewish Writers and Artists in U. S., meeting, greeting to Jews in USSR—Madison Square Garden.

21—NEW MASSES meeting, "Six Months of the War," place to be announced.

24—(Christmas Eve) Veterans of the Lincoln Brigade, Ball, Manhattan Center.

31—(New Year's Eve) Advertising Guild, Mad Arts Ball, Manhattan Center.

JANUARY

17—NEW MASSES, Cross-section of American Folk Culture, Carnegie Hall.

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"I MADE A MISTAKE—" HITLER* by Lucien Zacharoff list price $2.00	6.25	.75

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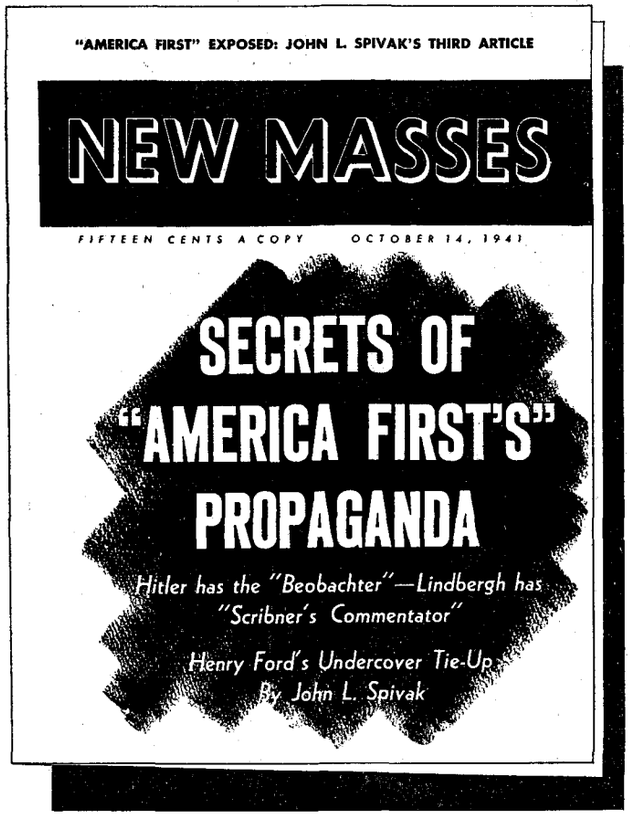
OCTOBER 14th....

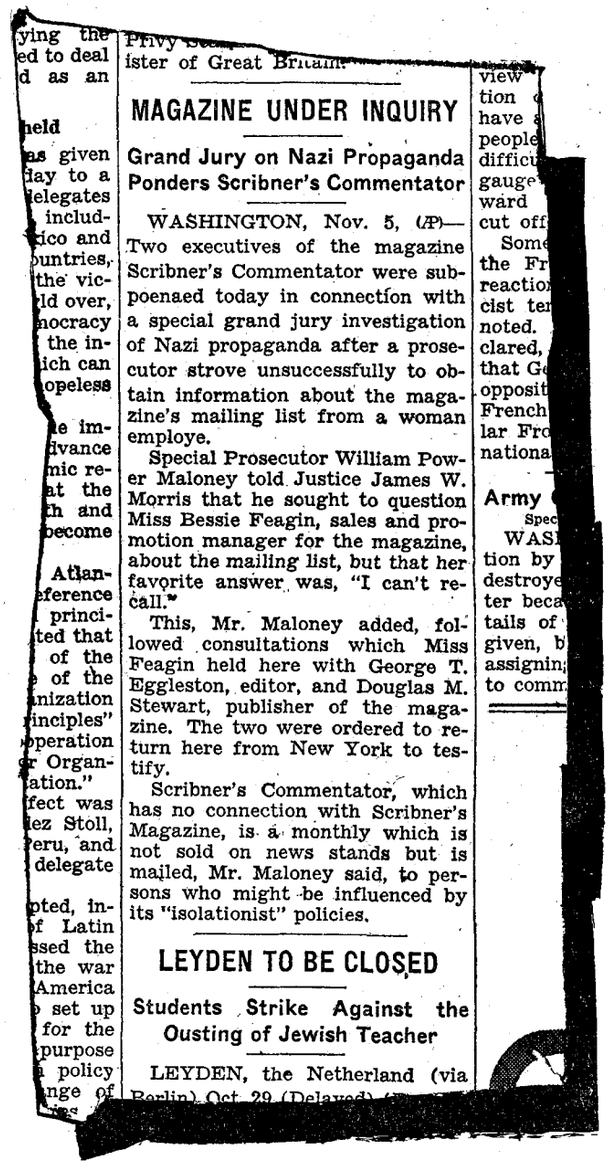

"AMERICA FIRST" EXPOSED: JOHN L. SPIVAK'S THIRD ARTICLE
NEW MASSES
FIFTEEN CENTS A COPY
OCTOBER 14, 1941
SECRETS OF "AMERICA FIRST'S" PROPAGANDA
Hitler has the "Beobachter"—Lindbergh has "Scribner's Commentator"
Henry Ford's Undercover Tie-Up
By John L. Spivak

"There are some questions I wanted to ask you," John L. Spivak said to Miss Bessie Feagin at "Scribner's Commentator" offices in Lake Geneva, Wis. He described his interview with her and revealed damaging facts about that publication in the October 14 issue of NEW MASSES. We are glad to see that a Federal Grand Jury is now asking her and her associates questions which will throw more light upon Nazi propaganda in this country. George T. Eggleston, editor, and Douglas Stewart, publisher of the "America First" publication, have also been subpenaed to appear before the Grand Jury.

Once again NEW MASSES made a distinct contribution to America's security. This magazine first exposed the espionage activities of Fritz Duquesne, master Nazi spy, as far back as Oct. 2, 1934. His trial in Brooklyn federal court bears out our warnings of seven years before. We put the spotlight on America First in the June 3 issue of NEW MASSES, this year. Several weeks ago Mr. Spivak wrote in our magazine: "The men behind this conspiracy are ruthless. They will stop at nothing to achieve their aims. There is no time to wait," he said, in urging a full congressonal investigation of Lindbergh and his co-conspirators.

NEW MASSES urges you to help it fight the plottings of these men who are sabotaging the program of national defense. Fight with us to safeguard the security of our country by becoming a NEW MASSES reader. Subscribe today for yourself or your friends.

NOVEMBER 6th....



ister of Great Britain.

MAGAZINE UNDER INQUIRY

Grand Jury on Nazi Propaganda Ponders Scribner's Commentator

WASHINGTON, Nov. 5, (AP)—Two executives of the magazine Scribner's Commentator were subpoenaed today in connection with a special grand jury investigation of Nazi propaganda after a prosecutor strove unsuccessfully to obtain information about the magazine's mailing list from a woman employe.

Special Prosecutor William Power Maloney told Justice James W. Morris that he sought to question Miss Bessie Feagin, sales and promotion manager for the magazine, about the mailing list, but that her favorite answer was, "I can't recall."

This, Mr. Maloney added, followed consultations which Miss Feagin held here with George T. Eggleston, editor, and Douglas M. Stewart, publisher of the magazine. The two were ordered to return here from New York to testify.

Scribner's Commentator, which has no connection with Scribner's Magazine, is a monthly which is not sold on news stands but is mailed, Mr. Maloney said, to persons who might be influenced by its "isolationist" policies.

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